

# Standard Whist

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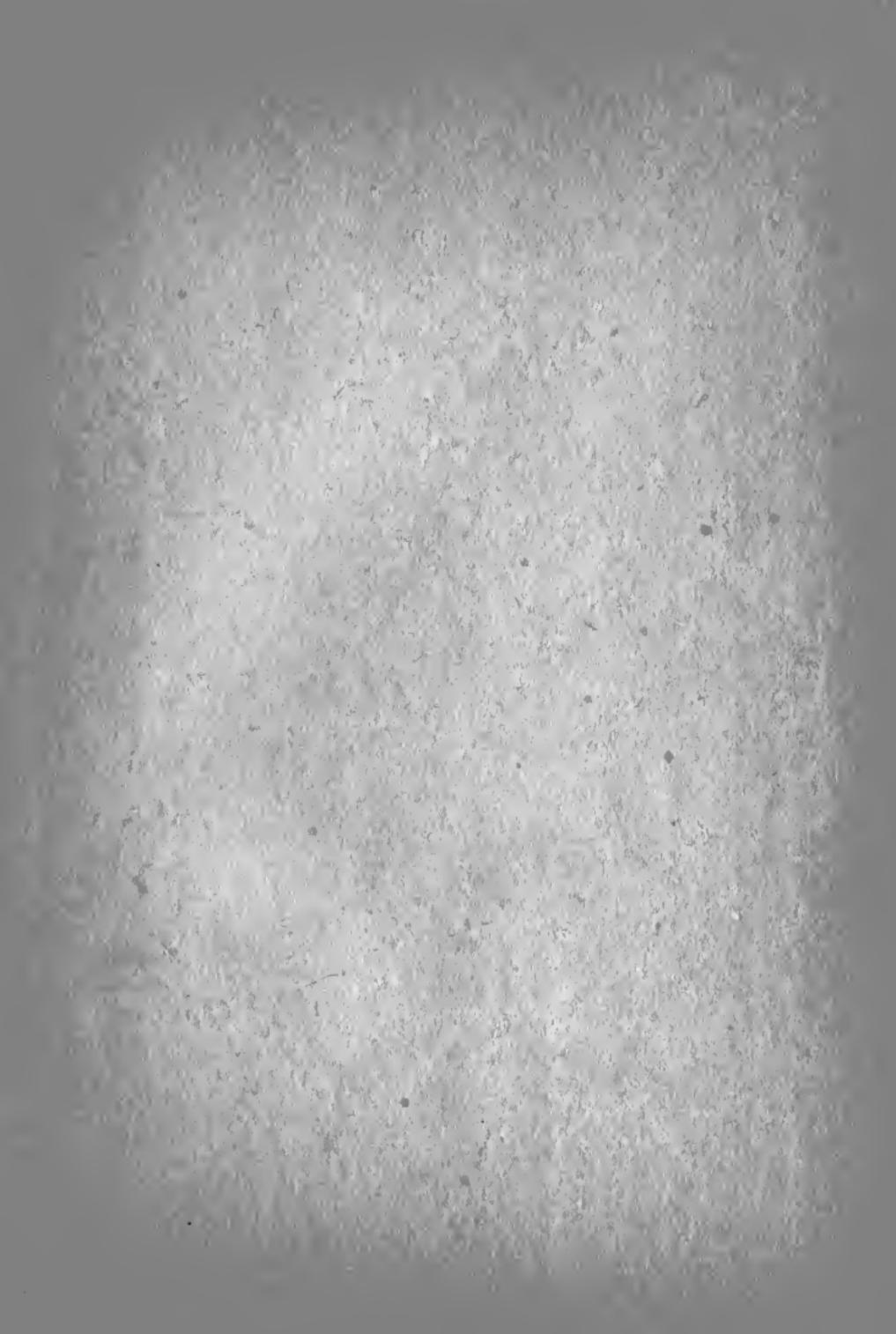
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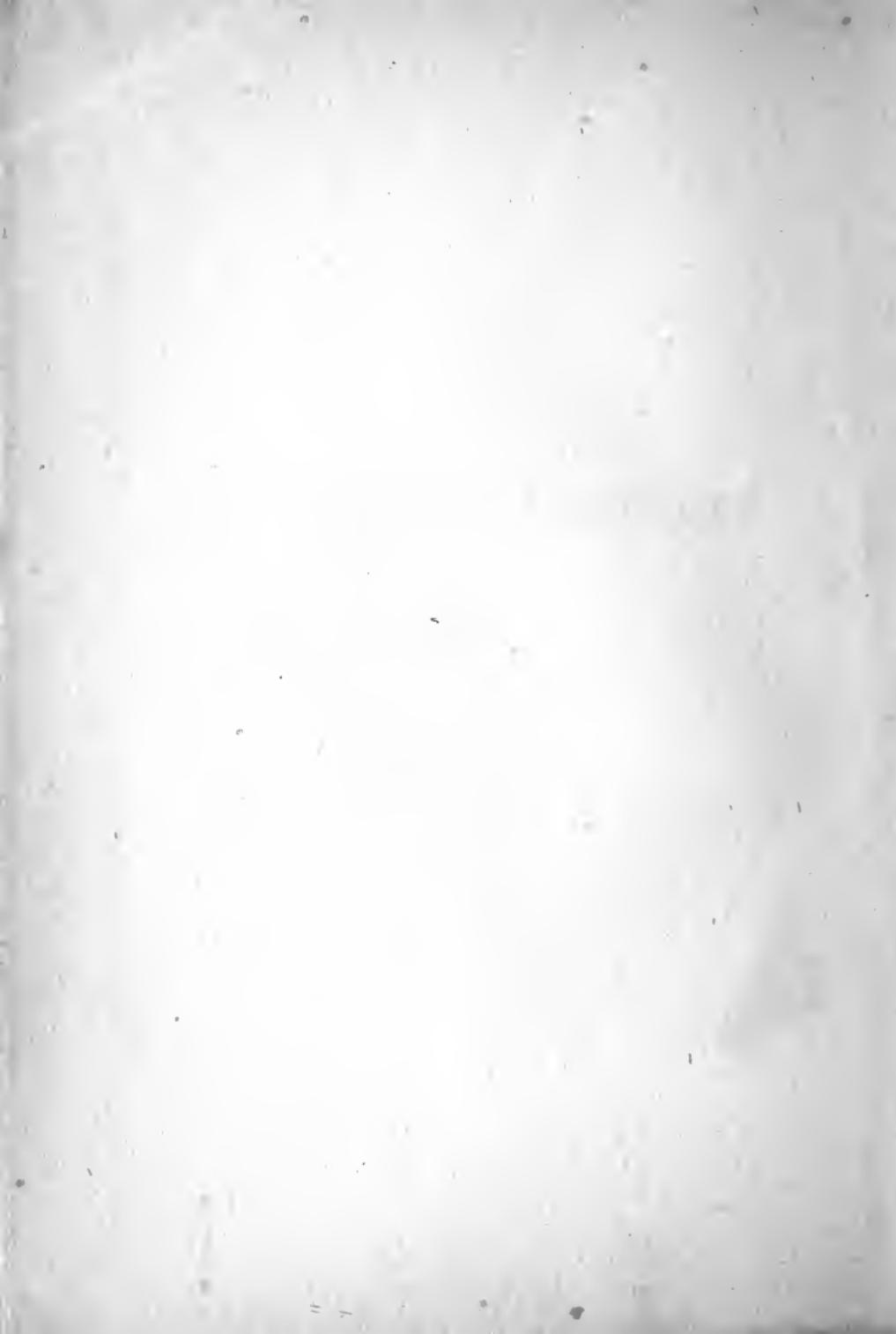
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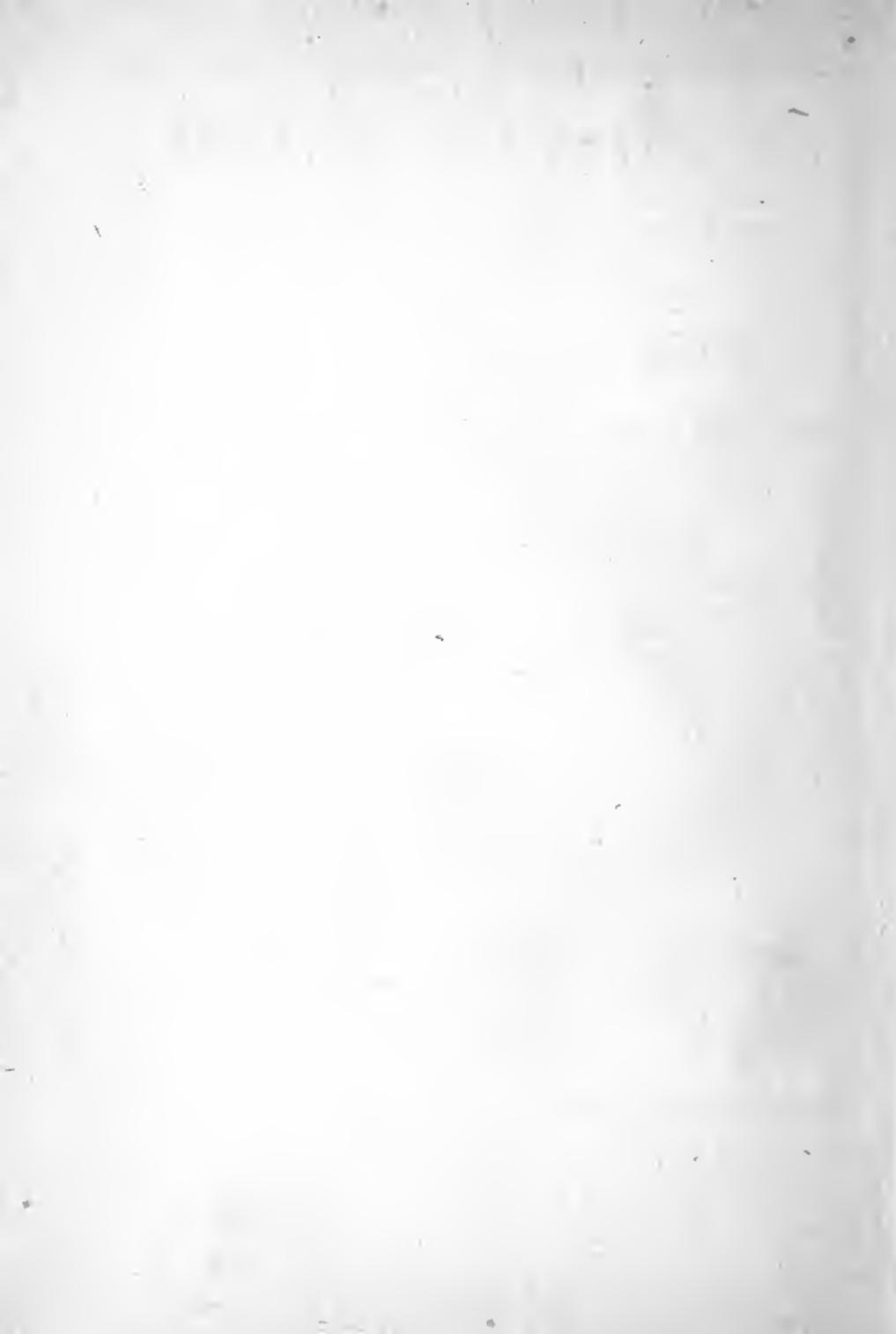








# **STANDARD WHIST**



# STANDARD WHIST

AN EXPONENT OF THE PRINCIPLES AND RULES OF THE MODERN SCIENTIFIC  
GAME OF WHIST AS ADOPTED BY THE AMERICAN WHIST LEAGUE  
AT THE NINTH AMERICAN WHIST CONGRESS CON-  
VENING AT CHICAGO, JULY 10, 1899

BY

ANNIE BLANCHE SHELBY

"  
TO WHICH IS APPENDED

THE LAWS OF WHIST AND THE ETIQUETTE OF WHIST  
AS REVISED AND ADOPTED AT THE THIRD AMERICAN  
WHIST CONGRESS, CHICAGO, JUNE, 1893

AND

THE LAWS OF DUPLICATE WHIST

AS REVISED AND SUBMITTED AT THE EIGHTH AMERICAN WHIST CONGRESS,  
AND ADOPTED ON TRIAL FOR ANOTHER YEAR AT THE NINTH AMER-  
ICAN WHIST CONGRESS. EMBRACING ALSO A COMPLETE  
GLOSSARY OF COMMON AND TECHNICAL TERMS



HERBERT S. STONE & COMPANY  
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## WHIST

*“The instructor of youth and the consoler of age.”*

*“Whist is assuming the position of a great social element which Dr. Herbert Spencer will soon have to reckon with in his principles of sociology.”*

*DR. WILLIAM POLE.*

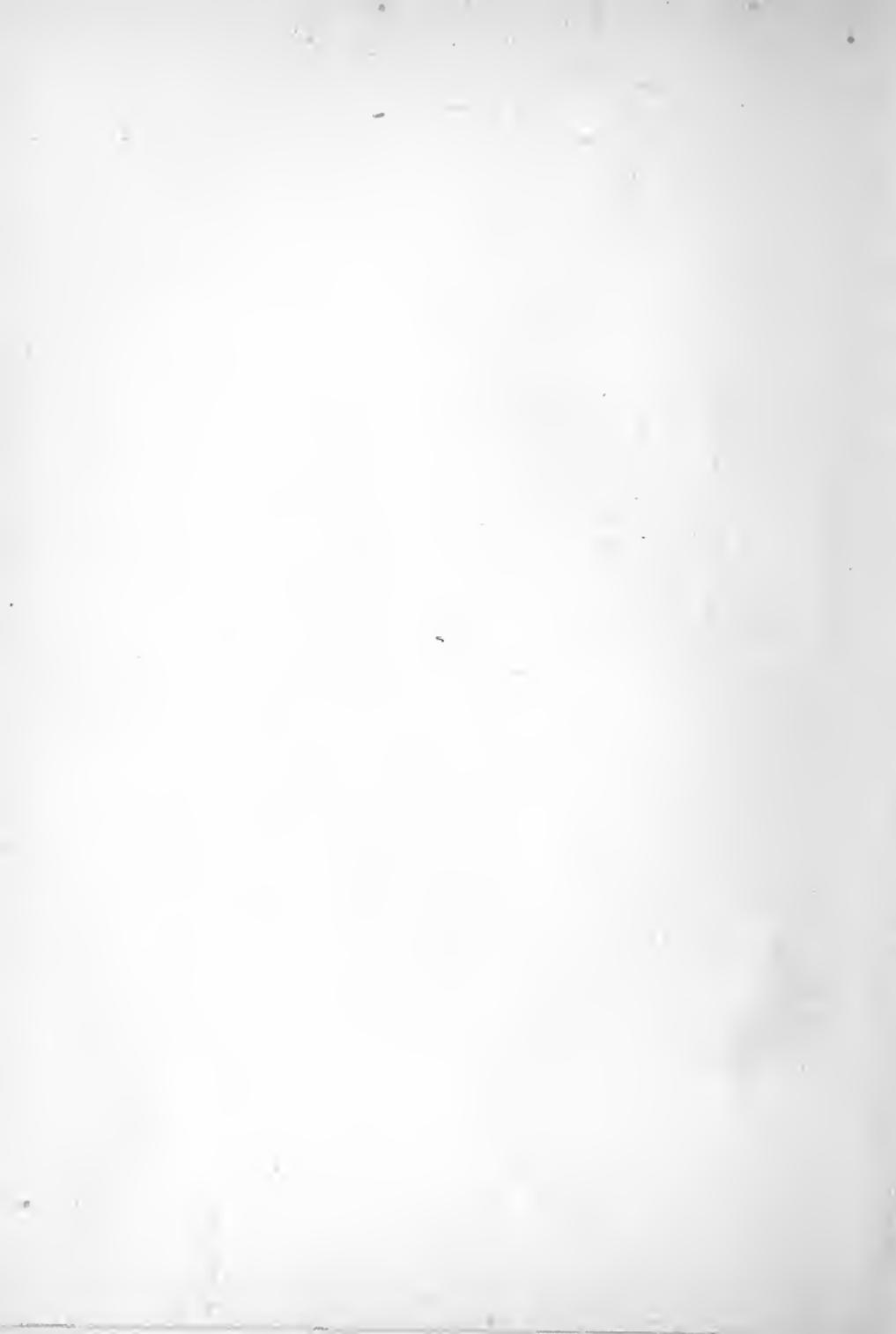
*“Naught can equal the infinite variety and charm of whist.”*



The works of Henry Jones (Cavendish), Charles Emmet Coffin, C. D. P. Hamilton, Fisher Ames, Dr. William Pole, Gen. A. W. Drayson, R. F. Foster, Arthur Campbell-Walker, Richard A. Proctor, Milton C. Work, Emery Boardman, Edmond Hoyle, William Mill Butler, John T. Mitchell, Kate Wheelock, Mrs. Mary D'I. Levick, as well as the writings of Nicholas Browse Trist, Cassius M. Paine, George H. Bunn, G. W. Briggs, P. J. Tormey, Robert Weems, T. E. Otis, Mrs. Margaretta Wetherill Wallace, Mrs. M. S. Jenks, and others have been consulted in the preparation of this work.



TO THE PUPILS WHOSE RESPONSIVENESS AND CORDIAL  
APPRECIATION HAVE MADE MY ROLE  
OF INSTRUCTOR  
AT ALL TIMES A PLEASANT ONE, AND WHOSE EN-  
THUSIASM AND UNSWERVING LOYALTY  
HAVE PROVED A NEVER-FAILING INCENTIVE TO THE  
COMPLETION OF THIS WORK,  
I HEREWITH AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATE IT.



## PREFACE

The recent action of the American Whist League in the adoption of a standard system of play, which, while as the League distinctly states, is not intended to be mandatory, nevertheless furnishes a tangible and recognized authority, is the most notable event, perhaps, which has taken place in the whist world since the inception of American Leads, and demonstrates once more the universal tendency of "the survival of the fittest."

The numberless innovations, fads, and so-called systems, which had from time to time been introduced into the game, had robbed it of its pristine purity, and left it in that condition in which the player felt he had nothing stable on which to base his confidence or repose his faith. The action of the League, therefore, fills a long-felt want, and save perhaps by the discomfited

## PREFACE

progenitors of so-called systems, is universally approved.

Confidence is restored, and the game given a new and fresh stimulus.

This work is in accord throughout with the tenets and principles of the standard game. It has been my aim to present the subject not simply in the light of a diversion, but of an educator, appealing to the highest order of intellect and reason. I have, therefore, wherever practicable, sifted to the very foundation, and stated not only that certain things are so, but *why* they are so; in other words, I have appealed as closely as possible to the reasoning powers of my readers, fully knowing that when once we understand the theory of the game, it will no longer be necessary to burden ourselves with rules, as reason, not precept, will be the guide.

Trusting it may fulfill the mission intended, I herewith submit it for the approval of my readers.

ANNIE BLANCHE SHELBY.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

### MANNERISMS, PENALTIES, ETC.

“Whist is a perfect microcosm—a complete miniature society in itself. Each player has one friend, to whom he is bound by the strongest ties of mutual interest and sympathy; but he has twice the number of enemies against whose machinations he is obliged to keep perpetual guard. He must give strict adherence to the established laws and the conventional courtesies of his social circle; he is called on for candid and ingenious behavior; he must exercise moderation in prosperity, patience in adversity, hope in doubtful fortune, humility when in error, forbearance to the faults of his friends, self-sacrifice for his allies, equanimity under the success of his adversaries, and general good temper throughout all his transactions. His best efforts will sometimes fail, and fortune will favor his inferiors; but sound principles will triumph in the end. Is there nothing in all this analogous to the social conditions of ordinary life?”

“Courtesy is nowhere more requisite, or its absence more remarkable, than at the whist table.”

## STANDARD WHIST

By a gradual but simple development, successive periods marking important strides and new and permanent improvements, the game of whist has acquired a prominence and attained a degree of excellence which the greatest enthusiast in the earlier stages of its advancement would hardly have thought possible, and which is viewed by the skeptic with wonderment and doubt.

As a game based on strictly scientific principles, susceptible of reasoning and yet dependent in no small degree upon the uncertain element of chance, the happy combination of chance and skill constituting, by the way, one of its strongest and most subtle charms, it stands unrivaled. It is so absorbing and yet so elusive, so full of varied and complex developments and of infinite possibilities, that it keeps the mind ever on the alert, the acquirement of one principle or truth but urging one on and stimulating the desire for the acquisition of more. Like a beautiful problem, it unfolds step by step, each unfolding offering, if possible, beauties deeper and more varied than those previously revealed.

## MANNERISMS, PENALTIES, ETC.

Possessing in so marked a degree elements and characteristics calling for the exercise of mental skill of the highest and most versatile order, it is not surprising that many of the brightest and brainiest men, not only of the present time, but of the past century, have pursued its study with close and unremitting attention. As a result of this study, we, the votaries of whist, to-day have for our encouragement the invaluable counsel of the best of players from the time the game was first introduced.

A system has been evolved, beautiful, harmonious, and complete; works innumerable have been written on the subject; golden precepts have been scattered broadcast, and our entry into the whist world is under conditions favorable to the last degree to the pursuit and comparatively easy acquirement of this noblest and most intellectual of games.

To become a good whist player requires observation, thought, care, deliberation, concentration, perception, and judgment. I might go even further, and assert that it calls for the keen and incisive calculation of the mathema-

## STANDARD WHIST

tician, the coolness, deliberation, and experimental bent of the philosopher, the close observation and keen perceptive faculties of the naturalist, the broad reasoning powers of the logician, the ever-ready tact, diplomacy, and adaptability of the polished and urbane cosmopolite.

In recognition of the comparatively slight attention which is given by many, not only of the comparatively uninitiated, but of those who otherwise rank as good players, to some of the more abstract features of the game, I can but feel before entering upon an analysis, or treating systematically of the technicalities thereof, that a brief reference to a few of the more important of these may not be unwise or inopportune.

I desire, first of all, to touch upon mannerisms, than which there is nothing more reprehensible, or, when specially marked, more derogatory both to the character of the game and to the character of the player as an individual. Cassius M. Paine denounces them as "far more intolerable than what are sometimes miscalled 'private conventions.' "

## MANNERISMS, PENALTIES, ETC.

The manner of a whist player, from first to last, should be characterized by calmness, deliberation, and utter absence of cant or egotism, and the full complement of courtesy and consideration—in a word, should be quiet obliging, modest, and unassuming.

Unobtrusively taking up our cards, we should count and carefully sort them, arranging the several cards of each suit in their recognized order as trick-makers, and alternating the suits as to color, taking at the same time a rapid mental inventory of their respective merits or demerits, as the case may be, and then should play them one and all, no matter what the developments, with uniform calm and unmoved composure.

What is in more questionable taste than the undue emphasis with which some players mark their play when winning, or the languishing, lackadaisical air which characterizes a certain class of players when losing?

Not only is this reprehensible from a point of etiquette, but it is entirely at variance with one of the infallible marks of a good player; namely,

## STANDARD WHIST

to be no more elated over victory than downcast over defeat.

In all phases of life, in whatever we undertake, the desire to meet with success is paramount to every other consideration. This is not only natural, but right; it is a desire implanted by a divine ordering, and should be stimulated and encouraged to the last degree. If we finally, however, attain the object of our endeavors, is it courteous, right, considerate, or reasonable that we flaunt our success in the faces of those less fortunate?

Then why should this be permissible at the whist table? What unwritten law makes it right or proper that we should exult, either covertly or openly, over our less fortunate competitors there? Would our laurels be less pronounced, our victory less excellent or complete, by the judicious use rather of a little tactful consideration and regard? Were the conditions reversed—and in whist, as in war, there are none invincible—by what right could we expect the smallest modicum of the generosity or consideration so persistently withheld by us?

## MANNERISMS, PENALTIES, ETC.

If our opponents score the victory, let us concede it to them gracefully and graciously. Let us in no wise seek to detract from the glory thereof, as I regret to say is frequently done, by affirming that their success is owing less to their own good play than to errors which we ourselves have committed. In reality, as every whist player doubtless knows to his sorrow, this is often the case, but is it not wiser and in every sense more courteous to abstain from publishing the fact?

If we have committed errors which we may avoid in the future, we have marked an important era in our whist experience generally, and have, therefore, something over which to rejoice rather than lament.

Let us bear in mind that the truth of the adage, "Silence is golden and speech is silvern," is never more fitly exemplified than at the whist table; that, in short, "the nearer our play approaches to the dumb man, the better."

Let us remember that, in the words of Coffin, "every hand intelligently and carefully played is a direct gain in whist knowledge"; that, too,

## STANDARD WHIST

as the best faculties of the mind can be employed to advantage on but one thing at a time, the discreet player is he who concentrates his entire energies upon the subject in hand.

Let us never by word, glance, or sign, give the slightest intimation as to the character of our hand.

Let us in no sense be downcast if our cards repeatedly fall short of the average. There is far more honor in playing a poor hand well than in scoring hundreds of tricks for the simple reason that by virtue of the cards we hold it would be impossible to do anything else. The one trick saved under adverse conditions becomes the golden milestone which marks our successful pursuance of the mazy windings of the intricate and complex game.

Let us never—upon this point it is impossible to lay undue emphasis—no matter how justifiable apparently the cause, complain of, or find fault with partner. Aside from the courtesy of the act, there is infinite wisdom in abstaining from such a course. The result and successful outcome of the venture into which we have for the

## MANNERISMS, PENALTIES, ETC.

time being entered, is as much a matter of concern with partner as with ourselves. Our desires naturally are mutual, our interests identical. If, then, through error or errors of his, the result perhaps of momentary lack of perception, judgment, or memory, our score be appreciably lowered, he, if uniformly a good player, will be as conscious of the dereliction as ourselves, and to this consciousness will be added the tormenting pangs of self-censure and remorse.

If, on the other hand, his errors are the result of ignorance, the situation certainly will in no wise be improved by giving vent to the vials of our wrath. Such a course will often tend rather utterly to disconcert and humiliate him, reducing him to that state of mind in which he is powerless to put forth even the little of which he might otherwise be capable, thus rendering him a continual and ever-increasing burden.

The wise player is he who accepts his partner as he is, good, bad, or indifferent, and who, while ever ready to applaud him for good play, instead of for misplays covering him with abuse,

## STANDARD WHIST

by every means possible stimulates him to the very best of which he is capable.

The whist table, truly may it be said, is the crucible which reveals one's disposition in its true and unvarnished light, and seldom, if ever, is the impression formed of one by some lapse or breach of good manners there entirely eradicated or overcome.

The player who loses his temper not only lowers and debases the high moral and intellectual character of the game, but casts upon himself a stigma, which, however brilliant his qualities, will cause him to be equally dreaded as a partner and shunned as an opponent. The player, in fact, who loses his temper loses something more valuable still and far more difficult to regain —viz., confidence and esteem of his fellow-players.

Admitting that partner has committed errors, and perhaps serious ones, has our play been absolutely faultless? Have our inferences throughout been unqualifiedly true; have our calculations, plans, etc., been absolutely correct? Have we made the most of every difficult situa-

## MANNERISMS, PENALTIES, ETC.

tion which has been presented to us? Can we, in a word, rise from the whist table steeped in the blissful consciousness that not one trick has been lost through error, oversight, lack of judgment, perception, or calculation on our own part? If so, either we are players (and mortals) devoutly to be envied; or else, as in many other phases of life, intent only upon the mote which is in our brother's eye, we are serenely unconscious of the beam which is in our own. Our errors, to be sure, may not have made so appreciable a difference in the score, but that is not the question, nor does it in any sense modify or alter the fact of our having committed errors.

I would upon no account wish it to be inferred that I would deprecate or do away with the habit of friendly comment and criticism. I consider this, on the contrary, one of the greatest essentials to the acquirement and successful practice of the game, and would encourage it to the last degree whenever and under whatever conditions it becomes practicable.

If our score repeatedly be below the average, let us satisfy ourselves, whenever and wherever

## STANDARD WHIST

possible, as to whether this is owing to superior play on the part of our opponents, or is merely the result of some happy-go-lucky chance. Foster affirms, and the assertion is borne out in fact by the experience of players generally that "downright ignoramuses sometimes hit on plays that surpass the cleverest devices of genius, and that, although we perhaps inferred correctly the position of the last five cards, the duffers nevertheless took all the tricks and marked up the rubber."

If the investigation, however, show superior play on the part of our opponents, let us show ourselves in every way capable of appreciating the same. Let us emulate and strive to profit by the example which has been set us. In a word, let us resolve never to leave the whist table without carrying away some little germ of knowledge, some bright bit of information which can be carefully tucked away in the treasure trove of memory, and brought out and made to serve perhaps an effective and effectual use later on in our experience.

A word now in regard to penalties: If we play

## MANNERISMS, PENALTIES, ETC.

whist at all, let us play it thoroughly, conscientiously, wisely, and well. Let us be punctilious in regard to detail, strict and consistent in regard to form. If a player lead out of turn, expose a card, make a revoke, etc., let us not only exact, but in our own case, cheerfully concede the penalty attached.

This in reality works no hardship. It is a rule which applies both ways, and though to be sure its strict enforcement may be a little trying at first, and particularly to a player not overburdened with confidence or self-esteem, yet in precisely the same ratio in which the burnt child dreads the fire and endeavors thereafter to keep himself strictly aloof, so we gradually but surely will learn to concentrate our forces, and to keep our mind intent only upon the subject in hand until finally the violation of any of the prescribed laws will be of infrequent occurrence.

Every infringement of the laws which results in the payment of a penalty has an undoubted salutary effect, as indeed many of us have good cause to know from our own experience.

A brief reference before concluding as to the

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relative excellence of woman's play as compared with man's.

Until comparatively recent years the impression prevailed that woman was unable to play whist, and in the rare instances in which any of the sterner sex could be induced to play with her at all, it was rather in a spirit of condescension and extreme toleration than anything else. This impression, happily, is fast dying away, and though it certainly was not without foundation, it is sincerely to be regretted that it should ever have existed.

That with comparatively few exceptions, many of them, however, notable ones, women do not play whist as well as men, cannot but be admitted; that they cannot play as well, the successive periods of her advancement tend steadily to deny. Given her an equal amount of endurance, there exists in fact not the slightest reason why with proper training, care, and study woman should not attain the same degree of excellence in the practice and pursuit of whist which has been attained by man.

Let us, then—these remarks, it is needless to

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say, refer exclusively to the feminine portion of my readers—reduce our playing to a system, concentrate our forces, school, guard, and strengthen our resources, that we may in every way make ourselves “foemen worthy of their steel.” Indeed, when we realize what woman has accomplished in the world of whist, why should we be satisfied with anything short of the best?

The unique position which Kate Wheelock occupies has quite revolutionized the thoughts and opinions of the entire whist world, opening up before us a vista of heights and possibilities which before had existed but in the realm of dreams. Let us, then, keeping ever before us her lofty attainments, enter the vast and exhaustive field, not as the lesser lights, content to shine by the reflected light of some greater masculine luminary, but as aspirants ourselves, striving heart and soul for the highest honors which the whist world has it in its power to bestow.

## CHAPTER II

### THE LEADS — FIRST AND SECOND. PLAIN SUITS.

“American whist is recreative work, enjoyable labor, paradoxical as that may seem; its riddle is fascination; its practice is intelligent employment; its play is mathematical induction; its result is intelligent gain.”

The very firstlings of my heart shall be the firstlings of my hand.—*MACBETH*, Act iv, Scene 1.

The leads are aptly styled the alphabet of whist. They are the keynote, the “Open Sesame,” as it were, to the entire situation. If we would arrive at a proper appreciation of the inherent value of the combined game of whist, or if we would attain even a moderate degree of proficiency in the pursuance and study thereof, it is of paramount importance that we be thoroughly familiar with the leads, not only to the extent of correctly making them, but of at once grasping, and as far as possible applying to the

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joint benefit their full significance when made by others.

Lacking the ability so to do, we deprive ourselves entirely of the manifold advantage of the combined game. Lacking, too, a correct knowledge of the leads, it is useless to attempt the finer or more abstruse features of the game, for the very foundation, the corner-stone, as it were, has not been properly laid.

As no less eminent a writer than Pole observes, "Before becoming a fine player, one must learn to be a sound one."

Before fairly launching upon the subject of "American Leads," so named by "Cavendish," the great English authority, in compliment to Nicholas Browse Trist, of New Orleans, their illustrious founder, and a factor so powerful and far-reaching in the world of whist as to have completely revolutionized the game, I desire to impress upon the minds of my readers the necessity of faithful, earnest, and conscientious study.

Nothing comes to us without an effort; no goal is attained, no victory achieved, except in rare instances, without hard, long, and patient

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toil. The reservoir of our brain-pan will not fill up of itself; its waters, on the contrary, will ever remain dull and stagnant unless by our own efforts we cause to be turned upon it an ever-flowing, fresh, and limpid stream.

But few people are born geniuses; if any especial degree of excellence is attained in a particular plain or direction, it is largely the result of individual labor, of tireless study, of persistent, indefatigable research. Why, then, should we imagine that we can become adepts in the art of whist without putting forth the means to the end? Or why delude ourselves with the belief that our own experience—paltry and insufficient at best—will enable us to offset and successfully cope with the experience—individual and combined—of the best of players for the past hundred or more years, or ever since the game was first reduced to any sort of system, for—a fact not to be lost sight of—the rules and principles laid down for our guidance are the direct results of this experience.

In spite of this, not one of us but has met with the type of player—though it is pleasant to

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record that he is fast passing away—who openly exults that he has never read a book on whist in his life. Were he possessed of more penetration and less egoism, he would see for himself the utter needlessness of such a boast, the fact being too patent to admit of doubt. The self-sufficiency of such a player is beyond words to express; his short-sightedness is deplorable, his assertiveness, insufferable. He may be invested, too, and perhaps in no small degree, with the qualifications necessary to the making of a good, sound, and capable player—may be possessed, in short, of a no inconsiderable share of that most excellent quality termed *card sense*. Yet, owing to his overweening self-confidence and his fixed determination in no manner to familiarize himself with recognized plays, signals, rules, and conventions, to both himself and the one so unfortunate as to be his partner, the beautiful harmony and science of the game are as a sealed book, its pages inscrutably closed.

But to go on with my subject. The full strength of the partnership game lies essentially in the long suit opening; in an immediate

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declaration as to what constitutes one's strongest and therefore least vulnerable point of attack. This, both for the purpose, if possible, of establishing the suit (if it be not already established) in the hope finally of bringing it in, and in order, by at once enlightening one's partner as to the component features of one's holding, to insure at an early stage the surest and most effective means by which the two hands may be best utilized as one.

The long suit opening in other respects possesses manifest advantages over any other opening; not only does it admit, as the game develops, and as occasion may require, of full advantage being taken of any other system, but it serves from the very start as a good defensive lead, it being the one least calculated to contribute to the establishment of the suit of an adversary.

The practicability of the long suit opening being, then, thus disposed of, the question which first suggests itself is in regard to the best card to select as an original lead.

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### ORIGINAL LEADS,

six in number, are classified as follows: ACE, KING, QUEEN, JACK, TEN, and FOURTH BEST, under the last named being included the eight cards not above enumerated—nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, and two.

The term, *original lead*, it should be borne in mind, applies in all its purity to the opening or first lead of the hand—to the lead, that is, of the eldest hand, or the player to the left of dealer.

Though it is usual, unless developments render a contrary course advisable, for each player when first he makes a lead to open from his long suit, and with a conventional card, thereby proclaiming numerical strength, and sometimes, as well, the holding of certain high cards one is perfectly justifiable, after the first round has been played, in opening his hand in any manner which promises for his side the best and most satisfactory results.

Departures of any kind, however, should be regulated by reason and tempered by the cool light of judgment. Better blindly to follow rule,

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though our game be a mechanical one—the worst that can be said of a mechanical player perhaps is that he is but little dreaded as an opponent—than to depart therefrom in quest of some visionary goal which nothing in the fall of the cards or in our own hand justifies us in believing we can attain. And better, vastly better, strictly to follow rule than to adopt a course which will prove utterly misleading, influencing throughout perhaps, and in many cases to our serious discomfiture, the special character of partner's play.

THE LEAD OF ACE is an unusually strong lead, it being governed by one of two important considerations—*unusual* numerical strength, or *average* numerical strength combined with *high card strength*.

Briefly to sum it up, ACE IS LED from any suit of six or more cards not containing both king and queen; from any suit of five or more cards containing king, but not king and queen; from any suit of four or more cards containing queen and jack, but not king.

THE LEAD OF ACE, *in other words, proclaims*

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*six or more in suit; the presence of king (without queen) five or more in suit; or of both queen and jack (without king) four or more in suit.*

(Ace is also led from ace, queen, jack, three in suit. This, however, would constitute a forced or irregular lead, since every original lead should represent at least four.)

The second lead after an original lead of ace is governed partly by the fall of the cards and partly by the special combination led from.

When left with the commanding card it should in most cases be led, it being expedient to make our high cards while we may.

When left with both second and third best, save only when the combination led from is ace, queen, jack, etc., the proper second lead from which, as will be presently shown, depends upon number in suit, second best should be led, thereby forcing the best and leaving third best in command.

In other cases we follow with an original fourth best.

A twofold significance attaches to the follow of ace with original fourth best. It denies, on

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the one hand, the holding either of the command, or of both second and third best. It proclaims, on the other hand, an original holding of at least six, and two cards of intermediate rank between the two leads. A discriminating partner, by considering the relative value of the second lead with reference to his own holding in the suit, and the fall from opponents, will often have it within his power to determine the precise value of these two intermediate cards.

By noting, too, the absence of small cards, the ability to do which, by the way, constitutes one of the infallible marks of a good player, he can often estimate as to exact length of suit.

Ace being led from suits of four or more cards containing both queen and jack, the choice for second lead is determined by length of suit.

There is scarcely a more informative lead than the second one from this particular holding. It at once denies the king, marks the queen or jack, accordingly as one or other of these cards is led, proclaims the minimum number in the

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one case, and more than the minimum number in the other.

We are guided in our choice thereof by the general rule laid down for second leads, when, having first led a high card, we are left with two or more high indifferent cards. Cavendish states the rule thus: "*The second lead will determine the number of cards led from when the leader remains with two (or more) high indifferent cards. He leads the higher from the minimum number he can hold; the lower, if he holds more.*"

Ace, we have seen, as an original lead, is led from four in suit only when the suit contains ace, queen, jack. Queen and jack being high indifferent cards—INDIFFERENT because the follow of ace with either marks the holding of the other—the follow with queen proclaims four; with jack, more than four.

I desire to consider briefly the inherent value of the second lead from this combination, though to do so carries me slightly beyond my province at the present time and renders it necessary to touch upon the play of third hand. It is an indisputable fact, however, that we can arrive at

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an absolutely correct estimate of the value of the leads by considering them, not simply in their abstract sense, but, as far as possible, with reference to their influence and bearing upon the play of third hand.

To so familiarize one's self with the leads as to recognize them at a glance is comparatively easy. To get the proper inferences therefrom when they are made by others is an entirely different and much more serious proposition, yet in the ability so to do, as far as possible applying them to the joint benefit, is contained the very essence of the combined game.

Let us assume partner to hold king and two small cards of the suit of which we lead ace and then queen. Our choice of queen as second lead tells him to hold his king, even though he thus deprive himself of the ability later to put us again in the lead. The reason is manifest: Our holding in the suit consists of four cards only; unless, then, the remainder of the suit be evenly distributed, or unless some unlooked-for happy chance come to the rescue—and he who plays for the exceptional in whist is generally a loser—

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partner's play of king to our queen would not unlikely throw the command ultimately with opponent.

In other words, we have but four in suit; partner, three; six are with opponents. Unless these six are evenly divided, the fact is patent that four are in one hand. If partner, therefore, drop king to our queen (unless, to be sure, he hold 10 as well, when it would be necessary to the establishment of the suit in our hand that he *should* do so), it would simply be that the gods befriended us if the adversary who also holds four of the suit were not left with the command on the final round.

*If our suit is to be blocked, better, infinitely better, that it be blocked by partner than by opponent.*

It may be argued that the 10, the card next in value below the jack (declared in our hand) is as likely to be with us as to be held adversely, which being the case the suit would be blocked were partner not to play the king. This brings me to the one exception of following ace with queen when the lead is from the ace, queen, jack combination, four in suit. If the fourth card

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(the card lower than jack) be 10, the 10 and not the queen is the proper second lead, it being the more informative of the two. As when ace is followed with queen, this follow also proclaims a holding of four; furthermore, by placing the 10, as well as queen and jack, it announces—what is of paramount importance to third hand—our entire control so soon as king is out of the way. It calls peremptorily, therefore, for the play of king.

Now as to the follow of ace with jack. By this follow we proclaim the possession of queen and a holding of at least five. The conditions being different so far as length is concerned, the nature of our communication, also, is different, for we tell partner absolutely that we want his king—assuming him, as in the above-mentioned case, to remain with king and one guard only—that, in fact, a refusal on his part to play it would result in the blocking of the suit.

To be sure, should either opponent have renounced or trumped to the first round, or should second player renounce or trump to the second, unless in the one case partner were able

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to read us with a holding of at least seven, or in the other case of at least six, the expediency of withholding the king would of necessity make itself apparent.

Having considered in their various bearings the lead of ace, together with the proper follow, I now proceed to

### THE LEAD OF KING

A good general rule for the lead of king may be summed up as follows:

*King is led from suits of four (or even three —this, however, constituting a short suit lead) when containing the card next in sequence above the king (ace), or the card next in sequence below the king (queen), or both ace and queen.*

*The lead of king, in other words, proclaims four in suit — this is the only high-card lead, by the way, which proclaims definitely as to number — and the presence of ace, or queen, or both.*

When led conformably to the first ruling, we follow king with ace; conformably to the second, with lowest card of suit, fourth best. The

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king holding the trick, the inference is that ace is with partner; it behooves us, therefore, on the second round to draw it, that queen may be in command for the third.

To be sure no inference can be drawn subject to iron-clad rules, and there is a possibility always that the ace is being adversely held up. Even were this so, however, the small would still be the proper lead.

King being led conformably to the third ruling, accompanied, that is, by both ace and queen, the choice for second lead falls upon queen preferably to ace, as being the more informative of the two. One exception to this must be distinctly noted, to wit:—The object of the combined game being to give, not to conceal, information, it follows that when the fourth card of the suit is jack, in other words, when the suit is made up of the QUART MAJOR, ace, king, queen, jack, not the queen, but the jack becomes the proper second lead.

To an intelligent partner the situation will be as clear as though the cards were in his own hand.

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Again:—if the suit consist of king, queen, jack, and any card lower than jack save 10, by a similar process of reasoning the choice for second lead (ace having been played to the first round) falls, not upon queen, but upon jack.

In the event of ace not having been played to the first round, on the assumption that it is in the hand of partner, not the jack, but the small card should be led; otherwise, should partner's original holding have consisted of ace and one small only, the command might easily pass on the final round to opponent. A contingency of this nature is one to which we are especially liable when our suit consists of four cards only; therefore at all such times it behooves both ourselves and partner to be more than usually on our guard, in order, if possible, to prevent our high cards from falling together.

In conformity with the above line of reasoning, and that partner if remaining on the second round of the suit with ace and one small only, may recognize the importance of playing ace to this round, or for the informative features in the event of ace having been played to the first

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round, the choice for second lead, the suit consisting of king, queen, jack, and 10, falls, not upon queen, nor yet upon jack, but upon 10.

If we thoroughly analyze the above various combinations, we cannot fail to see that strong underlying principles are at the foundation of every lead, and the further we advance in the delightfully complex and fascinating study of whist, the more and more convinced will we be of the undoubted wisdom, the strong common-sense principles, the clearness, the force, the exceeding practicability of the maxims and rules laid down for our guidance. Their one aim clearly is to so instruct us as to enable us in every particular to give the maximum information in the simplest and most effective way, and in the ability to do this surely is contained one of the chief requisites to the successful working out of the partnership game.

The lead of king, save only when from both ace and queen, is undeniably the weakest of the high-card leads. It stands for a suit of average numerical strength only; hence, unless the suit otherwise be evenly distributed, or unless the

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fall to the first and second rounds be unqualifiedly in the leader's favor, the cases will be of rare occurrence where he will be in command for the final round.

The follow of king with ace denies queen, the follow of king with small card proclaims queen, but denies ace. These are important inferences which third hand should carefully note and accurately weigh and consider. Unless he himself hold a good suit, or high-card strength in the shorter suits, the two hands throughout are undeniably weak, and anything like an aggressive game is usually clearly out of the question.

The considerations governing

### THE LEAD OF QUEEN

are simple in the extreme.

The following rule covers the case:—

*Queen is led from foot of sequence to king or ace, five or more in suit. The lead of queen thus proclaims the presence of king (possibly of ace) and a holding of at least five.*

When led from sequence to king, the second lead depends of necessity upon whether queen

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falls to ace or holds the trick. If the former, we follow with king, the commanding card; if the latter, we drop to a low card, not necessarily to the lowest of suit, but to such an one as will leave remaining in our hand two cards of intermediate value between our two leads, as when we lead a small card after an original lead of ace.

The small-card led after an original lead of ace ranks as an *original fourth best*; after an original lead of queen, as *fourth best remaining, or original fifth best*.

The slight variation in form is attributable to the fact that in the one case the card originally led is the card *heading the suit*, while in the other case it is the *second best of the suit*; the principle involved in the two cases is identically the same.

Queen being led from foot of sequence to ace, the follow, as in other cases when left with high indifferent cards, depends upon number. Followed by ace, five exactly are proclaimed; by king, more than five.

Now for a brief résumé of the play of third

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hand, when holding certain combinations, bearing upon the lead of queen:—

Holding ace, jack only of the suit, third hand at once plays ace, the reason being obvious. (He observes the same play, and for the same reason when, holding these [two cards only, king is led.) Holding ace, jack, and one small, he plays small to the first round and ace to the second, thereby freeing himself of the command while as yet he has the jack as a return lead. His correct play when holding combinations other than those given, or more than three in suit, will be found fully discussed under THIRD-HAND PLAY

### THE LEAD OF JACK

is not only one of the strongest leads, but it is without doubt the most significant and informative of all the leads. This is the only lead which denies no card; the jack, therefore, would be the correct lead from a suit made up exclusively of the thirteen cards of one suit. The queen and jack leads, also, are the only ones which proclaim *prima facie* a holding of as many

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as five. The other leads *may* be from four; if a greater number be held it is usually the second lead rather than the first which proclaims the fact.

A good general rule for the lead of jack may be stated as follows:

*Jack is led from all suits of five or more cards containing sequence to king, or sequence to ace; that is, from all suits of five or more cards containing both king and queen, with or without ace.*

*The lead of jack, then, proclaims a holding of at least five and the presence absolutely of both king and queen. If ace also be held the first round usually will indicate.*

In conformity with the general rule for second leads when left with high indifferent cards, if jack be followed by ace, five exactly are proclaimed; if by king (ace also being in hand), six exactly; if by queen (ace also being in hand), seven or more.

Jack being led from foot of sequence to king, the follow with king proclaims five; with queen, more than five.

Not only does the lead of jack put third

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player, one's partner, in possession of definite inferences as to the essential features of one's holding in the particular suit, but it enables third player as well—when holding the ace—by playing or retaining it, as the case may be, to inform the leader approximately at least in regard to his holding, his play being in harmony with the principle of retaining the command so long only as it does not interfere with the establishment of the suit in the leader's hand.

To be sure the ace may be the only card he holds of the suit, or he may be induced to play it earlier than he otherwise would in order, perhaps, to lead trumps. I am speaking of correct play and correct inferences, not under exceptional, but under ordinary conditions. So long, then, as partner retains the ace, we read him with two other cards at least of the suit; so soon as it is played with but one. As a direct result of the information thus afforded, it is given us frequently to *count the cards*, a habit, by the way, which we should strive to acquire as early as possible, it being of the greatest value and often proving an infallible guide as to correct play in

## STANDARD WHIST

cases where otherwise we would be involved in doubt.

To illustrate the case: Jack, we will say, is led from foot of sequence to king, six in suit, the jack holding the trick. To the lead of queen, second round, partner plays the ace. Opponents follow to both rounds. Eight, therefore, of the suit have been played; four remain with us. Twelve, then, are definitely accounted for. Who holds the missing one? Partner or opponent? In the mind of a discriminating player there can be no doubt, as partner, if holding originally ace and one other only, would have played ace to the first round.

We have been repeatedly warned against the continuance of a suit of which it is apparent both opponents are void, they not at the same time being disarmed of trumps; hence, we at once recognize the importance of leading trumps (if the hand otherwise admits of the play), or at least of resorting to some expedient which promises results less disastrous than would be apt to follow upon the immediate continuance of the suit.

## THE LEADS

A simple rule for

### THE LEAD OF TEN\*

may be given as below:

*Ten is led from all suits of four or more cards containing both queen and jack, but neither ace nor king; in other words, from foot of sequence to queen, four or more in suit.*

*The lead of 10, then, proclaims four or more in suit, and the presence of both queen and jack, but of neither ace nor king.*

The second lead after an original lead of 10 depends, as in other similar cases, upon length of suit. If there be four only, the queen will proclaim it; if more than four, the jack.

Having considered in all their bearings the various combinations which call for the lead of a high card, it remains but to add that from suits not containing these combinations a low card should be led, not necessarily the lowest of suit, but the fourth best card, counting from and including the card heading the suit, familiarly known and spoken of as

\*Third hand's play in connection with the lead of 10, also of 9, will be fully explained under THIRD HAND.

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### A FOURTH BEST LEAD

A correct understanding of a fourth best lead implies a correct knowledge of all the high-card leads; a fourth best lead is, in fact, in every sense much more significant than at first appears.

While it denies the holding of such a combination as would call for the lead of a high card, it proclaims, on the other hand, three cards higher and possibly one or more lower than the one led. The relative value of these three cards an observant partner, by taking into consideration the rank of the card led with reference to his own holding and the fall from opponents, will often be enabled definitely to ascertain. By carefully noting, too, the absence of small cards—the importance of which practice has been already referred to—he can often determine as to precise length of suit. It may be that upon the correct turning of inferences of this nature will hinge the one play upon which depends the success or failure of a player's entire hand.

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### THE LEAD OF NINE,

though, to be sure, an original lead only in the sense of a fourth best lead, is entitled to special mention as being fully as important, and as admitting of as adroit play on the part of third-hand player as any of the high-card leads.

The lead of 9 marks in the leader's hand one of three important combinations—ace, queen, 10, 9; ace, jack, 10, 9; or king, jack, 10, 9.

*How* and *why* this is so will become easily apparent if we but sort the cards into all the combinations possible with the 9 in each case ranking as a fourth best card. Save only when the suit is made up, as above stated, of ace, queen, 10, 9; ace, jack, 10, 9; or king, jack, 10, 9—in the two former cases not more than five in suit, for if six or a greater number were held, the ace would be the proper lead—the conditions would be changed and applicable to the requirements of a high-card lead.

The second lead after an original lead of 9 is governed, first of all, by the particular combination led from. If led from ace, queen, jack, 10,

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etc., the second lead should be ace, the commanding card. If led from king, jack, 10, etc., it depends of necessity upon the fall to the first round. If the 9 draw the ace but not the queen, the second lead should be king, the commanding card. If it draw queen, or both ace and queen, the king, jack, and 10 become of indifferent value, and, as in other similar cases, the choice depends upon length of suit. If there be four only, the king will proclaim it; if five, the jack; if more than five, 10.

In the event of 9 holding the trick,\* *Cavendish* advises the follow with jack (jack and 10 being high indifferent cards in the leader's hand) if the suit consist of four cards only; if of more than four, with 10.

The correct lead in other cases on the second

\* This particular phase of the question does not seem to have been specially considered. However, the follow with a small card, as doubtless would be advocated by some, on the assumption that possibly ace and queen *both* are with third player, would at times be impracticable, owing to the suit consisting of king, jack, 10, 9 only. In order, then, to preserve uniformity, the better policy, it would seem, would be in accordance with the form as above given. This, too, would effectually force a high card from second player, if—while a remote possibility, nevertheless one liable to develop—it should have suited him on the first round, holding, say, ace, queen, 8, etc., to hold up queen in the hope eventually—trump conditions being in his favor—of winning three tricks in the suit.

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round of a suit after an original lead of fourth best depends so largely upon the fall to the first round that it is impossible to lay down anything specific, or which will apply to each and every case.

If left with the commanding card, it is generally best to lead it. The rule calling for the commanding card on the second round of a suit—whatever be one's position at table—except when, it being in the hand of leader and of indifferent value with other high cards, it becomes expedient to lead one rather than another in order to proclaim number, or except when it is in sequence with one or more lower cards, or from the previous fall we have reason to know that a smaller card will be just as effective—admits of but little variation, there being the inevitable fear always that the third round will bring down an adverse trump.

If left with both second and third best cards, second best usually should be led. This in order at once to force the best and leave third best in command.

In other cases, unless developments perhaps

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have been of such a nature as to render the lead of a small card *inadvisable*, when one of intermediate rank may be led, it is usual to follow, either with the card next in value *above* the one first led (the suit consisting of four only), or the one next in value *below* the one first led (the suit consisting of more than four). This latter rather than of necessity with the lowest of suit—the suit consisting of more than five—the more effectually to proclaim in regard to number.

As to the expediency of continuing a suit a third round or of changing to a fresh one, it is impossible definitely to say, our course being determined by developments, by our relative strength or weakness in trumps, and by our holding in the other plain suits.

If our suit be established—**A SUIT IS ESTABLISHED** when we hold the complete control—and we hold at least four trumps with possibly a re-entry of another suit, there is undoubted policy in resorting to the lead of trumps, no trump strength having been shown adversely. This step becomes *advisable* occasionally, the suit being established, though we hold less than

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four trumps, if we hold considerable protection in one, or moderate protection in both of the two remaining suits. This will be found more fully referred to in the chapter on TRUMPS.

In the event of the trump lead being inexpedient, we should by all means go on with the suit, particularly if holding the command, if it is likely we may thereby force the strong adverse hand. This is a question sometimes difficult to determine, especially in the early and yet undeveloped stages of the game. It will generally develop, however—this being in accordance with the doctrine of probabilities—that a player who is void of a suit early in a hand is one who holds four trumps at least, and whose hand, therefore, it is to our advantage to weaken.

It is generally better, too, to go on with our suit rather than resort to the doubtful policy of opening up a fresh weak one; especially is this advisable if it is likely we can thereby advantageously *place* the lead.

To sum it up in a word, it is better as a rule to go on with the suit, we not having trump strength sufficient to justify the lead of a trump

## STANDARD WHIST

and developments not having made it apparent that both opponents are void. To be sure, if partner has developed a suit, and especially if we have a *strengthening* card of the suit to lead him, or if we may lead *through the strong or up to the weak*, we may resort, as our judgment dictates, to one of these alternatives.

So, also, it would be best not to persist with the suit, it being still unestablished if a continuance of it would be likely to force partner, the conditions otherwise not justifying our so doing.

Conformably to the principle that it is ill-advised to allow one's hand accurately to be counted by a strong adversary, the number showing leads in cases where trump strength is declared adversely, may be modified to suit the will of the player. It would be quite proper, for instance, the conditions being of this nature, to lead king rather than queen from king, queen, five or more in suit; or vice versa, queen rather than king from king, queen, four in suit; to follow jack with ace from ace, king, queen, jack, six or more in suit, or with king or queen from ace, king, queen, jack, five in suit.

## THE LEADS

If, before the chance offers for making a lead from our suit, the original conditions governing the lead have changed, that is to say, if we have weakened the suit either by a discard or by ruffing—it being the trump suit—we ignore in our calculations the card or cards which have been previously played, and lead from it as it stands at the time the lead is made. If, for instance, we have discarded from a suit calling originally for the lead of queen, the suit consisting of king, queen, and three small cards, the conditions at the time we make the lead call, not for the lead of queen, but of king.

One exception to this rule exists both in the case of plain suits and of the trump suit, to wit: If, the suit being plain, the conditions originally justified the lead of ace (ace being led from any combination save only ace, king, five in suit, for in this case the king would become the proper lead), the ace should still be led as the conditions governing the lead are unchanged.

So, also, if prior to the development of a trump signal by partner, we, with an original holding of four trumps, have used one for ruffing,

## STANDARD WHIST

in response to the signal, unless holding the command, or a finessing card, we lead the lowest rather than the highest of the three remaining in hand. This insures the best chance of informing partner at an early stage as to our original holding.

## CHAPTER III

### SHORT SUIT LEADS—OTHERWISE FORCED OR IRREGULAR LEADS

"Every man's conscience must be his guide as to the amount of time he can devote to the pursuit of whist, but he need not think it time lost any more than the same hours given to algebra or any other study which means mental exercise only."

"Whist is both a science and an art."

The importance of leading originally from our long suit, and such a card, when practicable, as will put partner in possession of definite inferences as to the component features of our holding in the suit, has been repeatedly forced upon us.

As every hand of necessity contains one suit of at least four cards, and as this number—the average to each player of any one suit, there being thirteen cards distributed among four players, being, strictly speaking, three and a

## STANDARD WHIST

fourth—constitutes numerical strength, the cases should be of rare occurrence where we need be in any uncertainty as to our original lead.

Situations may and do arise, however, which involve more or less doubt, not, to be sure, as to what constitutes our long suit, but as to its inherent value, and the advantages to be gained in a trick-making sense by leading from it.

Let us consider the following—a somewhat exaggerated case, to be sure, but in view of the infinite variety of which deals are capable, one not unlikely to occur—a hand made up of a four-card suit composed of the 5, 4, 3, and 2, and three three-card suits, one consisting of the TIERCE MAJOR, ace, king, queen.

The question resolves itself not so much into what promises the largest gains as to what offers the least prospect of loss. As becomes instantly apparent, our only hope of scoring one trick in the suit, viewing it upon its own merits, lies in the chance of finding the remainder of the suit evenly distributed in the other three hands and in the maximum of trump strength being in the hand of partner.

## SHORT SUIT LEADS

So far as immediate results are concerned, there can be no doubt of the advantage of opening from the ace, king, queen suit, and should it turn out that this were partner's suit, well and good. We would have rid ourselves of the command, and in every way worked to the best interests of the two hands. If, however, and having two opponents and but one partner, the chances are two to one in favor of this contingency, the short suit should turn out to be the suit of opponent, would we not have established the suit for him? The very object which he would endeavor to attain had he the lead, we would generously though unwittingly have accomplished for him. We would, in short, in every sense of the word have played the opponents' game rather than our own.

Let us go still further, and assume—a contingency not unlikely—that having led from the short suit, the lead is still with us for the fourth round. What would we have accomplished? What would be our next recourse? Would we then take refuge in our long suit, or would we blindly risk another venture from a short one,

## STANDARD WHIST

thereby materially aiding perhaps in the establishment of another adverse suit?

The choice, as can be seen, is sometimes a difficult one, not so much as pertaining to the example cited, for in so extreme a case the majority even of the most conservative of long suiters would unhesitatingly declare in favor of the short suit, as in cases where the three-card suit is relatively weaker and the four-card suit relatively stronger, though headed by nothing higher, perhaps, than an eight or nine.

Whist inspiration is unfortunately most rare; the friendly light which would illumine our perplexed brain and infallibly guide us in such and similar cases as to the best course to pursue is but seldom forthcoming.

Cavendish, however, affirms that as we descend in one scale and ascend in the other, there comes a point where the two descriptions of strength nearly or quite balance. This being true, it cannot but be better, immeasurably so in the great majority of cases, to adhere strictly to the long suit opening, thereby doing away with the possible danger and resultant stigma of

## SHORT SUIT LEADS

deceiving partner, and placing it within his power, if winning the trick—and he stands usually an even chance of so doing—to at once open up and declare a suit of his own. The practice at any rate is a safe one, and one the observance of which will seldom, if ever, lead us into difficulty or surround the course of a trustful and unconscious partner with unexpected shoals and quicksands.

Even when the only four-card suit is the trump suit, there is no need usually for any deviation from the rule. This phase of the question will be found discussed more fully under the heading of TRUMPS.

The above remarks apply in their full force, it is perhaps unnecessary to state, to the opening or *initial* lead of the deal—when all the hands except our own are as a sealed book, and we must be guided solely and entirely by the doctrine of probabilities and by what the best and most successful experience has demonstrated to be for the greatest good in the greatest number of cases.

Later we have some data to guide us—some

## STANDARD WHIST

premises on which to base calculations and inferences. If developments, then, point to the inexpediency of opening from our long suit, it will seldom be the case that we need be in doubt as to the best alternative. One or more other suits will have been declared; partner's may have been led, or we may know it inferentially; or, lacking anything definite on this score, we may put in practice the ever-important principle of *leading through the strong, or up to the weak.*

All contingencies being possible in whist, however, it will undoubtedly be the case at times that we must resort to unconventional openings having no definite knowledge of any of the suits except our own. Cases are apt to arise, for instance, where, having originally led from our suit, the fall to the first round points to the inadvisability of going on with it—partner, or perhaps opponent, being obviously short, and it not being desirable to force them.

Situations are liable to arise, too, where right opponent, he alone having had a lead, declares the suit which also is our best, which being the

## SHORT SUIT LEADS

case, the continuance of the suit by ourselves, unless holding the complete control, or unless, it may be, for the purpose of forcing partner (the conditions otherwise justifying our so doing) would be a direct violation of one of the most important principles of the game.

In these and similar cases, unless having another suit of numerical strength, and occasionally when this is the case, we preferably open from a short suit, if possible from one made up of, or at least headed by, a sequence of moderate value, as queen, jack, 10; queen, jack, and one small; jack, 10, 9; jack, 10, and one small, etc., all such by reason of their peculiar construction being best calculated to work to the greatest good of partner's hand and the least injury of our own.

Leads of this description are properly termed

### FORCED LEADS,

we being forced to adopt them owing to the unusual developments and peculiar needs and exigencies of the game.

A lead from a three-card suit containing a

## STANDARD WHIST

MAJOR TENACE, as ace, queen, and more especially a TENACE DOUBLE, as ace, queen, 10, is in most cases unwise, unless, it must be directly understood, partner may have developed strength in the suit, and the lead is for the purpose of STRENGTHENING him, of aiding him—that is, both by getting rid of what high cards we hold of the suit, and by forcing higher ones if held adversely to the early establishment of the suit in his hand.

A lead from a two-card suit, also, especially if the suit contain an honor not in sequence with another honor, unless again for the purpose of strengthening partner, should in most cases be avoided.

The lead of a singleton—a SINGLETON, is a lone card of any suit—should only be resorted to in cases where, our suit having been already declared, there can be no danger of partner's being deceived into supposing it to stand for our best. The possible benefits accruing to opponents from our strict observance of conventional form—this cannot be too firmly impressed upon us—are in nowise commensurate with the irrepa-

## SHORT SUIT LEADS

rable harm which may come to our side by our adoption of a single misleading play.

The only singleton conceded justifiable as an original lead, except developments be most exceptional, or the situation most critical, is the ace of trumps, and this only is justifiable when we hold commanding strength in the three plain suits. The ace of trumps at once followed by a plain suit can leave a penetrating partner at least in no doubt as to the true situation, or as to the importance on his part as far as within his power lies, and as speedily as possible, of exhausting the adverse trumps.

*A lead from a two-card suit calls for the higher of the two, save occasionally in the end play of a hand when it is not desirable that partner should finesse in the suit. (Finesse will be found considered under THIRD HAND.)*

*A lead from a three-card suit calls for the card heading the suit if it be headed by two high cards in sequence—it is usual, however, to lead king rather than ace, from ace, king and one small—or if it be headed by jack or card lower than jack; otherwise for lowest of suit.*

## STANDARD WHIST

The lead of the highest of three, the suit being headed by two high cards in sequence, or by jack or card lower, offers the surest means of enabling partner successfully to finesse in the suit. At the same time we incur no special risk to our own hand in case the suit should turn out to be the suit of opponent.

The lead of the lowest of three, the suit being headed by card higher than jack, though not by two higher cards in sequence, admits often of defense on our part should opponent develop strength in the suit. Should the suit turn out to be partner's, a little foresight will in the generality of cases enable us to rid ourselves of our high card of the suit before there is danger of its blocking.

When a lead from a short suit is for the purpose of strengthening partner in the suit, the lead assumes a different character, becomes in strict parlance an

### IRREGULAR LEAD

rather than a forced lead—a lead, that is, directly at variance with given rules for leads under ordinary conditions.

## SHORT SUIT LEADS

Leads of this character demand the lead of the card heading the suit, *irrespective of its value*; in other words, we give partner *the best of our weakness*, not only the sooner to apprise him of our being short in the suit—had we as many as four, unless holding the *command*, or an *original high-card lead*, we would lead the lowest—but in order at once to rid our hand of such a card as might otherwise block, and will at the same time perhaps assist in the establishment of the suit in his hand.

In such cases if the card led hold the trick, or so soon as the opportunity offers for the continuance of the lead, we follow, not with the lowest of suit, but with the card next in value to the one first led. This not only works frequently to the early and complete establishment of the suit, but aids partner in determining the number we hold; by inverse calculation, then, the number held by opponents.

In other words, it enables him to infer at an early stage as to the particular distribution of the unplayed cards of the suit not in his own hand.

## CHAPTER IV

### TRUMP LEADS

"The greatest pleasure in life is winning at whist; the next greatest pleasure, losing."

"In whist, as in war, there are no trifles."

The leads in trumps are essentially different from the plain suit leads. If we but give the subject a moment's consideration, the reason for the difference, and not only the reason, but the undoubted wisdom of the reason will at once strongly appeal to us. We shall see that the principle involved is entirely in accord with the principles throughout of the American lead system, a system, which at all times and under all conditions is susceptible of close analysis, and, what is greatly more to the point, bears convincing evidence of its merit in the test of actual play. When possessing certain combinations of high cards in plain suits, we lead a high card

## TRUMP LEADS

preferably to a low one. Why? The answer is twofold: First, the trick otherwise might be won adversely with a low card; secondly, our high cards if held too long are liable to be trumped, and therefore not make at all.

In the trump suit, and in plain suits as well, when the adversaries are exhausted of trumps, the latter contingency at least does not exist, and as it is of the highest importance, a fact with which we cannot be too strongly impressed *that we be in the lead when the last trump is played*, the policy of playing a BACKWARD GAME becomes so apparent as to call for no discussion.

An immediate lead of our high or commanding trumps, our holding not being sufficiently strong to justify it, not only makes good the chances of the command ultimately being held adversely, but practically reduces partner's chances of winning a trick in the suit to one in three instead of one in two.

The lead of a low trump, on the other hand, though holding high or commanding ones (the lead being from average strength only) insures the best chance of our being in control at a more

## STANDARD WHIST

advanced, and therefore generally more critical period of the game; at the same time, it gives partner, assuming that second hand will play low—an even chance of winning the first trick, and with a card of comparatively low value.

There is perhaps no whist principle which is of greater inherent value, or the successful application of which involves at times closer calculation, more complete subtlety, or deeper finesse than the one I have just referred to—that of retaining the control in trumps. Countless games are lost by ignorance or unmindfulness in this regard.

The rules governing

### TRUMP LEADS

may be stated as follows:

*If the suit be headed by three high cards in sequence (the four honors and ten are classed as HIGH CARDS), or by ace, queen and jack, irrespective of number, lead as in plain suits.*

*Lead also as in plain suits if, there being six or more in suit, the suit contain three high cards; if, there being seven or more in suit, it contain the two master cards; or if there be eight in suit.*

## TRUMP LEADS

*In other cases lead original fourth best.*

When the first lead is a conventional high card, the second lead generally also should be conventional, the rules governing second leads in plain suits being applicable under usual conditions to second leads in the trump suit as well.

When, however, the first lead is an original fourth best, and the leader not being marked with high indifferent cards, the number-showing leads cannot therefore be employed, it is best usually to follow with the lowest *winning* card. Having led, for instance, fourth best from ace, king, less than seven in suit, the follow with king is preferable to ace, as definitely locating the ace.

## SPECIAL TRUMP LEADS

are leads resorted to either by reason of the bearing of the turned trump upon the leader's holding, or because of some development, perhaps an actual or impending cross ruff, which renders it expedient to at once lead out commanding cards in order to insure as many rounds

## STANDARD WHIST

as possible before there is danger of the lead going from us.

Owing to the general adoption of the *false card lead*—this will be found fully explained under TRUMPS—the necessity for special trump leads, bearing upon the card turned, has to a considerable extent been done away with. When, however, it is expedient to employ them, the best interests of the hand seeming to call for an *immediate lead*, the following rules will assist one in determining the proper card to lead.

*If holding two high cards in sequence above, or forming a fourchette, with a high card turned to the right, lead the higher of the two. Lead the higher of two or more high cards in sequence below a high card turned to the left.*

This in the one case prevents fourth player to the trick from winning the trick with the turned card; in the other case it forces this card at once from the hand of second player, enabling partner perhaps to overplay him, or, in any event, enables partner to regulate his play according to its known position, as well as by the rank of the card turned.

## TRUMP LEADS

It would be rulable, then, from ace, king, etc., queen being turned to the right, to lead first ace and then king; from ace, queen, 10, etc., jack being turned to the right, to lead queen; from king, jack, 10, etc., queen being turned to the right, king; from king, jack, 9, etc., 10 being turned to the right, jack; from queen, jack, 9, etc., 10 being turned to the right, queen; from jack, 10, 8, etc., 9 being turned to the right, jack; from jack, 10, 9, etc., king or queen being turned to the left, jack. Leads from short suits in trumps are the same as short-suit leads in plain suits, they being influenced throughout by the same considerations and subject therefore to the same rules.

## CHAPTER V

### SECOND HAND

Whist is the gentleman's game, the scholar's recreation, the thoughtful man's amusement.—C. E. COFFIN.

“The game of whist combines rest, recreation, and the polishing and sharpening of the weapons of thought and logic.”

But few of us, I am convinced, correctly appreciate the importance of second hand play, the opportunities it offers for the adroit winning of tricks, and for imparting inferences as to the special character of one's holding in the suit declared by an adversary, which, to a partner possessed of an average amount of ingenuity and proper whist perception, can often be made to work both to the serious detriment of the original leader and the manifest advantage of the force combined against him.

When a small card is led, fourth player (one's partner) stands usually an even chance of win-

## SECOND HAND

ning the trick; hence, as the maximum of strength in the suit is obviously to one's right, there is policy usually in holding up high cards, especially tenaces, until the return of the lead, when one becomes fourth player to the trick. The usual play, therefore, second in hand, is a low card; generally, unless desiring to signal or echo—these terms will be explained in the chapter on TRUMPS—the lowest one holds of the suit led.

By the improved order of play, however, the old rule, "second hand, low," is no longer an arbitrary and hard-and-fast rule of the game.

Second hand, in fact, is no longer an automaton blindly following the letter of the law, but, as Foster aptly expresses it, "he is the intruder who continually steps between the leader and his partner and upsets their best laid plans."

To a player thoroughly familiar with the six original leads the play of second hand becomes comparatively a simple matter, for upon the correct turning of inferences derived from the lead bearing upon his holding the success or failure of his play throughout to a very appreciable extent depends.

## STANDARD WHIST

The principal exceptions to the play of a small card, second in hand, will be found briefly summed up in the following:

*Play high when holding such a combination of cards as would justify the lead of a high card.*

*Cover the original lead of an honor from strength with ace.*

*Cover a 9 or higher card if holding a FOURCHETTE—that is, the card next in value above and the card next in value below the card led.*

*Cover 9 with king, queen, or jack, if holding any of these cards once guarded only.*

*Play ace on small card led, if holding as many as seven.*

*Cover the card led in accordance with the principle of the Eleven Rule, whenever practicable.*

Now for a brief résumé of the above plays: First: play a high card when holding such a combination of cards as would call for the lead of a high card.

This important difference, however, should be distinctly noted: Cards in sequence, though occasionally led highest first, are played in their regular order of numerical progression, lowest

## SECOND HAND

first. Any reversal of this form (if not intended as the beginning of a signal or echo) would be wrong in principle and totally misleading, since the play of any card at second, third, or fourth hand denies (or at least, should deny) the holding of the card immediately below it. The play of ace, for instance, denies king; the play of king denies queen; the play of queen denies jack, etc. The play of jack, on the other hand, leaves the inference that queen also may be in hand; the play of queen, that king also may be in hand; the play of king, that ace also may be in hand—none of these cards being *known* to be otherwise located.

A twofold reason controls the play of a high card from a combination which calls for the play of a high card: The desire, first, to win the trick, or, by forcing a higher card, to promote in rank the others held. The play is also governed to a greater or less extent by the considerations which under certain conditions govern the lead of a high card—viz., the inevitable risk otherwise of the high cards being trumped. Under the above ruling come all suits headed by

## STANDARD WHIST

ace, king; ace, queen, jack; king, queen; queen, jack, 10.

When our holding in the suit led includes a sequence, not, however, heading the suit, as ace, queen, jack, etc., again not necessarily the high card which would be led, but the lower of the two high cards in sequence should be played. From ace, queen, jack, therefore, with or without others, jack should be played.

A suit including ace, queen,\* with or without others, calls for the play of ace on honor led, of queen on 9 led, the leader presumably holding king, jack, 10.

A suit including ace, queen, 10, § etc.—ace, queen, 10, constituting a DOUBLE TENACE—calls for the play of ace on honor led; of 10, if small card being led, it be desirable to obtain

\* Cavendish further advises the play of queen on small card led, if, holding five in suit, the hand be weak in trumps.

§ Cavendish advocates the following: “In trumps, play ten, or with cards in sequence, the lowest of the ten sequence. In plain suits, if strong enough in trumps to lead them, play ten, or lowest of sequence; if weak in trumps, play queen. With ace, queen only, play ten whether strong in trumps or not.”

Cavendish advises further the play of the lower of the jack, ten sequence from a suit headed by king, jack, ten; also the cover of eight with ten from a suit consisting of an honor, ten, and one small, and of eight with nine from a suit consisting of jack, nine and one small.

## SECOND HAND

the lead; otherwise for the play of small as the risk, it is claimed, of third hand winning the trick cheaply is likely to be more than offset by the disadvantage of being left in the lead should the 10 hold the trick. This would be especially disadvantageous in cases where the only strength of our hand lay in this particular suit.

A suit including ace, jack, 10, and consisting of less than seven—with as many as seven the ace should be played—calls for the play of lowest of suit, or the lower of the jack, 10 sequence, accordingly as the suit led is a plain or the trump suit. As, the suit being plain, the lead of a small card would demonstrate that king and queen both were not with leader, one of these cards of necessity would be with third or fourth player; the play of a high card, then, would be simply a waste of strength. If the suit be the trump suit, the conditions are radically changed, as, owing to the backward lead, king and queen both may be with leader; the lower of the jack, 10 sequence, then, should be played.

Suits headed by high sequences, as ace, king, or king, queen, without regard to number in suit,

## STANDARD WHIST

call for the play of the lower of the cards in sequence; save only when the suit is the trump suit, or when, it being a plain suit, we have strength in trumps, and it seems expedient to retain the control.

Suits headed by moderate sequences, as queen, jack; jack, 10; or 10, 9—with sequences of lower rank it is best usually to play our lowest card—call for the lowest of suit, or the lower of the cards in sequence, according to number held. If holding four or more, we play our lowest card; if less than four, the lower of the cards in sequence. In the one case we play to protect our own strength; in the other, to protect any possible high-card strength which may be with partner.

*Cover the original lead of an honor from strength with ace.*

As the rule distinctly implies, these plays refer exclusively to the lead of an honor or 10 from strength. If the lead be from weakness, and especially if to known strength in the hand of third player, the situation is radically changed, and it becomes best usually to withhold the ace,

## SECOND HAND

though frequently right to cover with an honor lower than ace if holding one higher than the one led once, twice, and sometimes even three times guarded. This in order if possible to defeat the ostensible object of the lead—that of *strengthening the hand of third player by enabling him to finesse*. Especially should this play be observed in the trump suit, and more than ever so when the lead is in response to a signal.

*Cover a 9 or higher card if holding a FOURCHETTE*—the card next in value above and the card next in value below the card led constituting a fourchette. The purpose of the play is the same as in the play just above referred to, namely, that of depriving third hand of the option of a finesse. A systematic covering of leads of this character forces a cover from third hand, and thus not only compels the expenditure to the same trick of two adverse high cards, but at times elevates to the rank of command in the hand of partner a card which otherwise would fall on a subsequent round to the adverse commanding card. Many players believe so strongly in the value of this play that they cover even

## STANDARD WHIST

when holding an imperfect fourchette, jack, and 8, for instance, on 9 or 10 led.

The holding of a fourchette proclaims, *prima facie*, an irregular lead, as a card which would be with leader were the lead conventional, must by the very nature of a fourchette be with the holder thereof. If queen, for instance, be led when second player holds king and jack, the lead is irregular, the conventional lead of queen proclaiming king. So, if 10 be led, and second player hold jack and 9, this lead also is irregular, as the conventional lead of 10 proclaims queen and jack.

*Cover 9 led with king, queen, or jack, if holding any one of these cards once guarded only.* The inherent wisdom of playing king on 9, when holding king and one small only, is easily apparent. (If second player hold king, the 9, it is clear, is from ace, queen, or jack, 10.) The king, therefore, would inevitably fall to the second round if not played to the first.

The same conditions exist when, holding king and 9, 8 is led, and call also for the play of king.

Reasons somewhat similar govern the play of

## SECOND HAND

queen or jack, when, holding either of these cards once guarded only, 9 is led. Not only does the play of the high card insure the only chance of saving it (for it would inevitably fall otherwise to the second round), but it insures the best chance of saving a possible high card in the hand of partner.

There can be little doubt, in fact it has been demonstrated, that the play of king, queen, or jack, as the case may be, when once guarded only, wins a trifle oftener than it loses, regardless of the rank of the card led. Still, though, as has been somewhat uniquely expressed, "Whatever you do, you wish usually you had done the other thing," it is extremely doubtful whether such play is for the best ultimate good of one's hand. It gives, in truth, evidence of weakness which it were generally best to conceal, satisfying the original leader on the return of the lead of the expediency of a finesse which it is not likely he would otherwise venture, thus often killing in the hand of partner a card which at a more advanced stage, and especially in the event of trumps being exhausted, might have proved

## STANDARD WHIST

a veritable rock of defense, effectually interfering with the establishment and bringing in of the adverse suit.

Some players approve of the play of the small card in plain suits, but of the honor in trumps, as, owing to the policy of the backward lead in trumps, the margin in favor of the honor winning is somewhat greater than in plain suits. As the proclamation of weakness in the trump suit can, however, be as readily turned to one's disadvantage as a similar proclamation in plain suits—as it is in fact even less desirable in trumps than in plain suits that we inform a strong adversary of weakness, it is usually best, unless wishing to at once stop the lead, or the suit being plain, to obtain the lead in order perhaps to lead a trump, to adhere throughout to a uniform system, and play the small

And infinitely better is it, as we can but be convinced if we consider the question in its two-fold phase, that our king, queen, or jack, as the case may be, be captured on the second round than that a card of partner's which might have proved a formidable weapon at a critical stage

## SECOND HAND

should be ruthlessly sacrificed to our inordinate desire to possess ourselves of the immediate trick.

*Play ace on small card led when holding as many as seven*, otherwise, only when wanting the lead. With a holding of seven, the play of ace is imperative, and for obvious reasons; with a less number, it is well usually to chance the first trick to partner.

*Cover the card led in accordance with the principle of the ELEVEN RULE whenever practicable.* An application of this rule, for the invention of which the whist world is indebted to R. F. Foster, the well-known whist expert, and the undoubtedly versatile author of a number of works on whist, enables a player definitely to infer the number of cards higher than the one led which are not in the leader's hand—that is, which are variously distributed in the other three hands. The rule is applicable only to the lead of an original fourth best card.

The most simple explanation, perhaps, of the rule appears in a formula elaborated by P. J. Tormey, one of the most enthusiastic and lead-

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ing whisters in the United States, into what is known as the FOURTEEN RULE. It is in substance as follows: Enumerating the cards in the order of their relative value as trick-makers, the ace, by reason of its superiority in this respect, takes the precedence, in other words, it heads the denomination, and so makes the denominations of the cards run from two to fourteen. The original lead of a fourth best card marks three cards higher in the hand of leader. Deducting three from fourteen, the result is eleven, the number of cards in the suit exclusive of the three in the hand of leader. Deducting from eleven the face value of the card led—that is, the number of spots it contains, gives the number of cards higher than the one led which are against the leader.

To illustrate, at the same time showing the manner in which such inferences can be applied to the interests of second-hand player: This player, we will assume, holds ace, king, 10, and 8 of a suit of which 7 is led. By deducting three from fourteen, which gives eleven, and by further deducting from eleven, 7, the face value of

## SECOND HAND

the card led, he is enabled to read that four cards higher than the one led, 7, are not in the leader's hand; a momentary consideration, moreover, shows him that these four cards are in his own hand. Instead, therefore, of playing king, the correct play under ordinary conditions, and thereby weakening his hand to no purpose, he plays the 8, knowing that, barring a trump from third hand, it will hold the trick.

Again:—An ace originally led is followed by 8, original fourth best. Second player, holding king, queen, 9, and one or more small of the suit, having played small to the first round, on this round simply covers the 8 with 9, an application of the eleven rule again enabling him to infer (that original fourth best is led on the second round of the suit rather than on the first in no wise affects the correctness of the inference) that the card so played, barring a trump from third hand, will hold the trick, leaving him at the same time in full control of the suit.

A question which involves more or less per-

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plexity is when and when not, being void of the suit led, to trump. It may be stated as a rule, one, however, liable to important qualifications, that one should generally trump, the trick being a doubtful one (a **DOUBTFUL TRICK** is one the result of which is as yet uncertain) if holding less than four or more than five trumps.

This rule, as stated, is liable to important qualifications, and it will sometimes be found best to take the force holding four or five trumps, and to refrain from taking it holding three. As the cases wherein such exceptional plays should be observed depend upon the developments of the game, upon the size of one's trumps, and upon one's holding in the remaining plain suits, it is impossible to specify them, and like exceptional plays generally, they must be left to the reason and judgment of the individual player.

If the trick be a **SURE ONE** against us, and especially if we have reason to think that it will be followed by other winning cards to which partner doubtless must follow suit, we should trump, regardless of number, unless we can see that by passing we will make eventually as many

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tricks again as those we pass. A failure to trump under such conditions would constitute a trump signal, and a most emphatic one, and partner should get in at any hazard and comply with the demand.

With regard to correct second-hand play on the second round of a suit, there is but little to say, much, if not all, depending upon the size of the card led, the special combination held, one's relative strength or weakness in trumps, and the inferences gathered from the previous round. We should ever bear in mind, however, the importance of playing the command unless having reason to know that a smaller card will be just as effectual, unless having trump strength sufficient to justify a finesse, or unless developments point to our scoring one additional trick at least for the one we pass.

The policy of holding up in trumps, either on the first, second, or subsequent rounds, should be resorted to whenever in the judgment of the individual player this promises for the best interests of his own or his partner's hand. Second-hand play in trumps should be influenced

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throughout to a greater or less extent by the considerations which affect the lead of trumps—viz., the importance of retaining the command. Especially should this policy be observed when, holding strength in trumps, we also hold a good plain suit.

Obvious plays will suggest themselves in trumps by reason of the card turned. It would be right, for instance, to play king, queen, or jack, if, having turned either of these cards, we hold it once guarded only. So, also, it would be right to play king, queen, or jack, if holding either of these cards singly guarded, a higher honor is turned to our right. It would be obviously right, also, to play jack in cases where, queen being turned to our right, we hold ace, king, jack, etc.; or small card in cases where, queen being turned by partner, we hold ace, king, etc. Conformably to the principle that it is more important in cases where trump strength is declared strongly against us, to deceive adversaries than to inform partner, it would be proper to play king rather than queen, if, holding these two trumps only, ace is turned to our right; or

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king rather than queen, if, holding king, queen only, we have turned the king.

Plays of a similar nature will doubtless suggest themselves throughout as occasion may demand.

## CHAPTER VI

### THIRD HAND

"That which makes whist the greatest source of intellectual recreation, which imparts to it a fascination unknown to other diversions, is that it takes one so completely out of himself."

The Golden Rule is an excellent maxim for the guidance of the third hand. Let him do for his partner what he would like his partner to do for him.—R. F. FOSTER.

The opportunities which third hand offers for play of a skillful and adroit nature, whereby we can impart inferences as to the relative strength or weakness of our holding in the suit which the leader (our partner) declares as his best, are varied and interesting in the extreme. In the entire province of whist we can in truth occupy no position which devolves upon us a greater responsibility, or which calls for a more thorough knowledge of conventional rules, or a stricter and more conscientious observance of

### THIRD HAND

the same, than when, as third hand, we find ourselves the partner of a thoroughly earnest, good, and intelligent player.

The system of American Leads, together with the improved order of the play of second hand, the direct result of these leads, has completely done away with the impression which formerly existed in regard to third-hand play, and the old rule, "third hand, high," has become practically a dead letter. To be sure there are countless instances wherein the rule must be strictly adhered to, but the belief that the play of third hand can be summarily dismissed by the formula of so concise and simple a rule—one the observance of which calls for no skill and is entirely void of the finer and more scientific features of the game—is not only erroneous, but to the whist player of to-day too utterly absurd to admit of discussion.

The ability accurately and quickly to draw inferences both from the lead and the play of second hand, and as far as possible to turn to the joint benefit the knowledge so obtained, is the first and most important requisite to success-

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ful third-hand play. In a word, to be a thoroughly helpful and responsive partner, we must not only take in at a glance the full measure and significance of the lead—of the play of second hand as well—but by means of the intelligence through these mediums obtained we must be able at once to formulate the plan or system of play which offers the greatest apparent possibilities for the combined good, directing, it is needless to say, all our forces toward the successful accomplishment of this end.

Card sense is an excellent thing, and the possessor thereof devoutly to be envied. To fancy for a moment, however, that the possession of this quality, even when developed to an unusual degree, renders it unnecessary for one to be possessed of a certain modicum of conventional knowledge, is to confess to an amount of egotism which the player (to say nothing of the individual) were much better without.

As William Mill Butler pithily observes, "Whist *geniuses* may need no rule whatever, but they should not on that account throw those less gifted into chaos."

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When, as leader, we hold such a combination of cards as justifies the lead of a high card, certain arbitrary rulings guide us as to the particular high card to lead, the choice in some cases falling upon one, in other cases upon another of these high cards. As in many cases the high cards held by us are of the same inherent value, so far as our hand individually is concerned, the choice frequently may be said to represent a distinction without a difference.

As can readily be seen, then, and as an able writer has aptly expressed it, "The leads, as a fixed system, have been adopted for the benefit of the partner of the player making them, rather than directly, of the player himself."

Certain codes, certain rulings, certain leads from certain combinations have been devised, not so much for the benefit to the hand employing them, as for the purpose of enlightening one's partner as to the essential features of one's holding. If this player, then, be not responsive, alert, and comprehensive, quick to grasp the situation, and to do all that in his power lies to turn the information afforded him to the com-

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bined good, infinitely better is it, in view of the fact that one has, perhaps, two shrewd and watchful opponents, that such information be withheld rather than disclosed.

Now as to the details of third-hand play: Assuming, as in default of evidence to the contrary, we have every reason to do, that the card which partner leads is a correct index to the character of his hand, it behooves us, his suit not being established, by every means within our power to assist him in ESTABLISHING it; in gaining, that is, both by the play of what high cards we hold of the suit, and by forcing higher ones, if held adversely, for the small cards of his suit a value which does not intrinsically belong to them.

To this end, and to take the trick if possible, it devolves upon us, a small card being led, to play the highest card of the suit which our hand contains, unless second hand has covered with a higher card than we hold, or unless the cards heading the suit in our hand are in sequence, when, in conformity with the recognized play

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of cards in sequence, the lowest of the sequence should be played.

If, however, we hold ace, king, at least four in suit, the play of ace followed by the return of king is preferable to the usual form of king followed by the return of ace, as conveying the announcement of numerical strength, and therefore warning partner against a further round of the suit until the opponents have been disarmed or partially disarmed of trumps.

Still another exception exists to the above. This play, by the way, constitutes the one and only finesse permissible as a rule in partner's suit.

## FINESSE

is a form of play based to a greater or less extent upon speculative inferences, and involving more or less strategy, whereby we endeavor to win a trick with a card lower than our highest and not in sequence with it.

Finesse which applies to the play of second hand as well as third without doubt constitutes one of the most fascinating features of the game

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of whist. As Hamilton observes, "Rob whist of finesse, and you take from the game its greatest charm."

When our holding in the suit of which partner originally leads a small card includes ace, queen, *more than two but less than five*, it is eminently proper that we play queen (or, of course, jack, if holding ace, queen, jack) rather than ace, it being safe to assume that *king*, the card against which we finesse, if not with partner, is as likely to be with right as with left opponent. The chances are two to one, in fact, in *disfavor* of this card being to our left. Should the finesse be unsuccessful—as Hamilton shrewdly observes, "The immediate success or failure of a finesse has nothing to do with determining the merit of play"—no error has been committed, and unless (an unlikely contingency, and one therefore scarcely worth considering) it so chanced that the king were a singleton in the hand of fourth player, in reality there has been nothing lost. Simply the order of tricks has been reversed, the first trick in the suit falling adversely instead of one on a subsequent round.

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If our holding consist of ace, queen *only*, the wisdom of the finesse becomes questionable, as should king be with second player, more than once guarded—a condition which our own numerical weakness makes more than ordinarily probable—the play of queen would seriously interfere with the early establishment of the suit in partner's hand. Let us assume, for example, partner's suit to be headed by jack, and king with two or more guards to be in the hand of second player. As can readily be seen, the play of queen followed by the return of ace, frees right opponent's king for the third round and prevents partner's jack from becoming good until the fourth. On the other hand, the play of ace followed by the return of queen forces the adverse king on the second round and frees partner's jack for the third.

So, if our holding include ace, queen, as many as five in suit, it is generally best also that the finesse be not made, the reason being obvious. Partner's holding consists of four cards at least; our hands contain jointly, therefore, nine, and possibly a greater number of cards of the suit.

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If the latter, one of the opponents is bound to be void on the second round at least; in either event, this contingency is likely to occur. It is best, therefore, to take no chances, but play the ace at once.

As before stated, then, and as cannot be too early or too distinctly impressed upon the understanding of the student, the only finesse permissible in partner's suit is against the second best card, or when we hold ace, queen, the MAJOR TENACE. Even then the finesse is permissible only when we hold not less than three nor more than four of the suit.

Any other finesse, though sometimes made and occasionally successful, so far at least as the immediate trick is concerned, is unwise, misleading, dangerous, and entirely at variance with correct, sound, and conscientious third-hand play, unless, as set forth by Hamilton, "there be something in the hand of the player who makes the finesse, viewed in conjunction with the state of the hand, the previous play, and the state of the score, which renders it otherwise justifiable."

On later leads, particularly if the lead demon-

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strate weakness in opponents' suits and in our own suit, we are allowed considerably more latitude, strength or weakness in trumps being usually a pretty correct guide as to whether a finesse would be right. If weak in trumps, it is wise usually to secure the immediate trick; if strong in trumps, and especially if strong enough to lead a trump if the finesse be successful, it is right generally to make it. It is usually right also to finesse against one, or even more cards, if upon the success of the finesse depends the odd trick. Contrariwise, it is wrong to finesse if by not finessing we may prevent the adversary from scoring the odd trick.

As Butler summarizes it, "If you only want one trick, take the safest way of making it; if several, risk a bold game to obtain them."

A strengthening card led to us by partner should, generally, be finessed, the same not being covered by second hand. Otherwise partner will have given of his best to no purpose, and the trick will cost us two high cards.

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### A STRENGTHENING CARD

is a card of high or intermediate rank, notably, king, queen, jack, 10, 9, which partner leads to our suit, declared or inferred, for the express purpose of forcing higher adverse cards, and thus working to the early establishment of the suit in our hand. How deeply we should finesse will depend upon our special holding in the suit and upon our relative strength or weakness in trumps.

In the trump suit, owing to its inherent value, we can finesse much more freely than in plain suits. It becomes occasionally best, however, to take the immediate trick, even in trumps, in order to insure the continuance of the lead. Obvious plays will suggest themselves in trumps by reason of the card turned.

THE OBLIGATORY OR ARBITRARY FINESSE, an extremely pretty and effective play, is the finesse on the second round of a suit of fourth best card, when, holding both second and fourth best, or when holding second best, fourth best

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is led by partner, the best is marked to our left.

This finesse applies usually, though not of necessity, to the hand of the original leader of the suit, and for the most part to cases where, the suit being returned by his partner, he becomes third player to the second round. To illustrate: We lead low from a suit consisting, we will say, of queen, 10, and two or more small. Partner wins with king and returns low. Second player (original fourth player to the first round) also plays low. Partner winning with king and returning low proves clearly the ace to be with left opponent. It becomes *obligatory* upon us, then—hence the name—to play, *not* the card heading the suit in our hand (and the second best remaining), queen, but the one next in value below it (and the fourth best remaining), 10, as if jack (the third best remaining), as well as ace (the best) be with left opponent, this player holds a tenace over us, and is bound, barring a trump from partner, to make two tricks in the suit, irrespective of our play. If, however, jack be with right opponent, the 10 will

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force the ace and make good our queen, whereas the play of queen would have made good right opponent's jack.

The situations calling for the play of the obligatory finesse occur quite frequently, and by a player familiar with the principle are recognizable usually at a glance. Some of our best players, among them John H. Briggs, believe so strongly in the intrinsic value of this play that they carry the principle still further, and argue that the queen should generally be held up on the return of one's suit, one's original lead being from queen and small cards, first trick being won by one's partner with king or ace, and the commanding card being marked to one's left, even though the card returned by partner has been covered by second hand.

What is known as

### UNBLOCKING,

a system of play by which we endeavor to rid ourselves of the commanding, or at least of what high cards we hold of partner's suit, that we may not at a later stage interfere with his ex-

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clusive control, he thus being enabled, perhaps—other things being in his favor—to bring in the remaining one, two, or more cards of the suit, as the case may be, is an extremely important and interesting feature of third-hand play.

It is a noteworthy and interesting fact that the unblocking play dates back to the time of Hoyle, instances being on record of his having illustrated its theory and practice in a variety of positions. For some reason the play fell into disuse, and even at the present time, though revived and brought into prominence some years ago by Cavendish, and though undoubtedly one of the great bulwarks of the modern scientific game, is unreasonably neglected by a number of otherwise very good players.

Unblocking applies simply to plain suits; the trump suit cannot be blocked. As has been observed, however, it becomes advisable at times to rid ourselves of certain high cards in the trump suit, either that we may not interfere with partner in his efforts to draw the trumps, or that he rather than ourselves may be in the lead for the final round.

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To successfully unblock, thereby proving ourselves a partner worthy of the name, calls for whist perception, keenness, and accuracy of the most exalted order. To sum it up in a word, we must have our wits well about us, must be ready in our inferences, quick in our calculations, tireless and indefatigable in our resources.

The lead of ace, queen, jack, 10, or 9—king alone of the high cards being excepted, for the reason that it stands for a suit of four cards only—imposes upon us, under certain conditions, a responsibility of no light nature, and in direct proportion to our ability successfully to assume the same, and to so play our cards as to turn the information afforded by the lead to the combined advantage, on our part conveying by our play information which will be eagerly looked for by a good, shrewd, and intelligent partner, will depend to no inconsiderable extent our success and pleasure in the combined game.

The lead of any of the above-indicated cards proclaims a possible, in the case of queen and jack, a *positive* holding of at least five cards.

When, therefore, we hold exactly four of the

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suit of which partner leads any of the above, it is not only possible but probable that he is longer in the suit than we are; *it is the shorter suit, be it understood, which unblocks to the longer.* It is incumbent upon us, then, at once to unblock (assuming that we make no effort to win the trick), and to this end we play, not our lowest but our third best card, following it on the second round (assuming again that we make no effort to win the trick) with second best, and on third round (unless partner's second lead from the suit proclaims a holding of four only, or unless the fall to the previous rounds points to the advisability of a contrary course, in either of which cases we may abandon the unblocking tactics and play our lowest card) with our best, taking, if need be, the trick already partner's.

We thus keep our lowest card until the last round, and so render it possible to put partner again in the lead, or, in any event, preclude the danger of taking the lead from him in the event of his having it.

To illustrate the case, we will assume partner to lead ace and then king from a suit of five or

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more, our holding consisting of jack, 8, 6, and 4. To the first round we play 6, to the second 8. To the third round—whether queen has been already played to this round, or whether the suit was trumped on the previous round, are questions which in no wise affect the situation—we play jack, retaining our lowest card, 4, until the fourth round, with the specific object in view, as above explained, of enabling partner, other conditions being favorable to this end, to bring in the remaining card or cards he holds of the suit. Were we at this stage left with the highest rather than lowest of our original holding, the command, it is plain to be seen, would be in our hand rather than in partner's, and should he hold no re-entry, the long cards of his suit would inevitably fail to make.

As has been observed, developments occasionally make it expedient on the third round of the suit to abandon the unblocking play, as when we would otherwise incur the risk of leaving the command of the suit with opponent, or when to do so enables partner definitely to place the remaining unplayed card of the suit not in his

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hand. The following illustrates the case: Partner first leads ace and then queen, the second lead proclaiming a holding simply of four. We, having played 6 to the first round, with a holding, say, of 10, 7, 6, and 2, must follow with 7, though partner's second lead conclusively shows our strength numerically to be as great as his. Our play otherwise, however, would constitute a call for trumps. This form we must observe, even though second player may have renounced to the second round, and thus marked fourth player as well with an original holding of four. On the third round of the suit, however, we should abandon our unblocking play and play our lowest rather than our highest card; otherwise we would run the risk of making good the 9, or a card of the same ostensible value—the 9, perhaps, having been played—in the hand of left opponent.

Again:—As in the former case, partner first leads ace and then queen. Second player plays respectively 9 and king. We, holding, we will say, 10, 8, 7, and 5, first play 7 and then 8. Fourth player, holding 2, 3, and 4, plays 2 and

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then 3. As the fall of the cards, in conjunction with our own holding, enables us to read fourth player with one other card only of the suit, we see it is impossible that any loss should result, as might easily have been the case in a case like the example above given, from the play of our best card to the third round. Partner, however, cannot so read, the cards which fourth player has played having been too small to furnish him with anything specific in this regard. In order, then, that he as well be enabled to read the situation, we abandon our unblocking play and play our lowest rather than our highest card. Our play throughout having been out of the ordinary, we having first played 7, then 8, and lastly 5, he correctly reads that we have been unblocking, holding four, and that the only unplayed card of the suit, therefore not in his hand is with us.

It may be argued that a play of this nature is confusing, as liable to be construed into a call for trumps.

A call for trumps consists, to be sure, in the play of a higher and then of a lower card of the same suit—this will be duly considered in the

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chapter on TRUMPS. The card, however, played to the first round of the suit is of *lower* rank *always* than the one played to the third round.

Where the play is an abandonment of the unblocking tactics, the card played to the first round is of *greater* rank than the one played to the third round.

When it becomes expedient to *both signal and unblock*, we reverse the usual order of play of the two middle cards, and play to the first round of the suit our second best, and to the second round our third best.

When, as is occasionally the case, our four cards are headed by two court cards—COURT CARDS are the ace, king, queen, and jack—it becomes best generally to abandon the call and observe simply the unblocking play. Otherwise we would both render ourselves liable to the loss of a trick and publish information which might easily be turned to our disadvantage. Moreover, when holding cards of this rank, more especially when holding ace and king, or king and queen, the chances are good for our obtaining the lead ourselves at an early stage. The

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situation, in any event, being one which will doubtless soon proclaim itself, it is needless to run any special risk in order to proclaim it beforehand.

When the best apparent interests of our side call for a discard from partner's suit (we having begun to unblock in the suit), we discard, not our lowest remaining card—this would cancel entirely the benefits we set out to attain—but the middle card of three, or the better of two, unless, being left with two only, developments may have shown that partner will need our assistance in the suit, when we would discard the lower.

Again:—When returning partner's suit, having begun to unblock in the suit, we return not our lowest, but our highest card, treating our own holding in the suit rather as a short suit. This, it will be noted, is an exception to the general rule calling for the return of the lowest unless holding the *command*, or *both second and third best*, when holding originally four of partner's suit.

The wisdom of the play, however, is obvious. The return of the lowest would not only undo

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all the good we have already done, but would at the same time complete a call for trumps.

As has been already observed, and as the foregoing makes fully apparent, the unblocking tactics call for the almost unlimited exercise of ingenuity, judgment, and skill; of unceasing vigilance and constant maneuvering. Having once undertaken them, we must have our forces well to the front and our subject thoroughly in hand, or we will run the risk of misleading partner and of involving both him and ourselves in a labyrinth of mazy and intricate complications.

When partner's original lead is a small card, and subsequent developments show it to be from a suit of five or more, we, with an original holding of four, must be on the alert to rid ourselves of our highest card (assuming that it has not been already played in an effort to win the trick) on or before the third round, if otherwise it would be liable to block. To this end we play our middle card to the second round, or the better of two to the third.

The four cards we hold of partner's suit may be of such slight value that by no manner of

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means could they block the suit, and conversely, their value may be such that no play will prevent their blocking. We must be uniform throughout, however, and adhere strictly to the prescribed form, and, indeed, so far as the latter contingency is concerned, two and sometimes three rounds of the suit must be played before the true situation makes itself apparent.

It may be stated that the unblocking tactics, considered simply from an abstract point of view, will be found but rarely perhaps to result in the desired end, for the reason that the suit is not brought in. There is a collateral feature connected with the play, however, which must on no account be overlooked, the essential benefits of which are as a matter of fact, much more frequently in evidence than those derived from the unblocking features.

It is of the greatest importance, as we cannot fail to know, that the original leader of a suit be enabled at an early stage to form definite ideas concerning the special distribution of his suit. This, his partner's observance, or on the other hand, his non-observance of the unblocking play

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assists him materially in doing, the inferences he gets negatively being of scarcely less appreciable value than those he gets positively.

Solely for the number-showing features, many of our advanced players recommend the observance of a form of play similar to the unblocking play on the lead of king, third hand holding four of the suit.

Also for the number-showing features, a similar form is recommended, though third player hold as many as five of the suit led. To proclaim a holding of five, it becomes necessary to retain, not simply the lowest card of the suit, but the two lowest cards until after the first and second rounds; that is, as when holding four, we play to the first round of the suit our third best, and to the second round our second best, partner inferring as to the number we hold from the absence of certain small cards which, not being in his own hand, and not falling from opponents, should otherwise have been played by us to the first two rounds.

Two combinations only call for unblocking on the first round of partner's suit when holding

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*three cards*—namely, when, *holding ace, king, and one small, 10 is led*; and when, *holding king, queen, and one small, 9 is led*. In the one case partner is marked with queen, jack, at least four in suit; in the other case, with ace, jack, 10, four, possibly five in suit. The play of king and the return of ace in the one case, and the play of queen and the return of king in the other, are therefore imperative.

It will be found expedient occasionally to unblock, holding originally three of partner's suit, on the second round, as when it develops that unless blocked by us he will eventually hold the command. Such cases call for the play to this round of the higher of the two remaining cards.

Holding *two cards* of partner's suit, four cases call for immediate unblocking—when *holding ace, jack, king or queen is led*; when *holding ace, queen, 9 is led*; when *holding ace and one small, jack is led*; and when *holding king and one small, 10 is led*.

If one will but consider the special significance of each of the above leads, the inherent wisdom of the respective plays in connection therewith will at once appeal to him.

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Except in the cases above specified, it is a direct violation of whist principles to play ace on any card originally led by partner higher than 9 (the card led not being covered by second hand) unless, that is, the developments of the game, or one's hand individually render the procedure otherwise justifiable.

When partner's original lead is 10, we holding ace and others, are practically in the same position as when a small card is led and we hold ace, queen, etc., when, as has been explained, it is right generally to finesse the queen. The same principle applies and governs the play in this case also. King, the card against which we finesse, stands an even chance of being to our right. Wherever it be, however, it must be played before the suit can become established. It is obviously right, therefore, to pass the 10, and should it develop that king were with right opponent, on no account, if within our power to control the matter, should we part with ace until this card has been played.

As has been before remarked—and the inherent wisdom of the statement is beyond dispute—

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if it is inevitable that partner's suit be blocked, better, and for every reason, that it be blocked by us than an opponent.

The lead of 9\* calls unconditionally for the play of ace (ace not being accompanied by queen and one or more other cards of the suit). The reason is obvious:—Queen, the only high card of the suit not definitely accounted for, stands an even chance of being with fourth player. This being true, upon no consideration should we put it in a position to win. If partner, the original leader of the suit, upon the return of the lead find it expedient to finesse the jack, the case is radically different and the responsibility is his. It may here be remarked that in the trump suit this finesse on his part would nearly

\* The 9, it must be borne in mind, stands for a fourth best lead representing one of three important combinations—ace, queen, 10; ace, jack, 10; or king, jack, 10.

Some card in third player's own hand or in the fall from opponents will usually enable him to determine, approximately at least, the special combination led from. If he hold ace, or this card fall from opponents, the lead is from king, jack, 10.

If he hold king, or this card fall from opponents, the lead is from ace, queen or jack, 10.

If he hold queen, or this card fall from opponents, the lead is from ace, jack, 10, or king, jack, 10.

If he hold jack, or king, jack, or he can otherwise definitely locate these cards, the lead is from ace, queen, 10.

If he hold king, queen, or he can otherwise definitely locate these cards, the lead is from ace, jack, 10.

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always be right, being governed by the principle that queen, if with fourth player (second player to the first trick), was originally twice guarded at least, or it would have been played to the first round, and so would inevitably be in command on the third round if not forced on the second. This finesse would generally be right in plain suits, also, if protected by trump strength.

Holding ace, queen, and one small of partner's suit, 9 being led, we play small to the first round, and ace to the second.

Holding king and small cards of partner's suit, 9 being led, we play king, as the 9 would inevitably fall otherwise to queen or jack, as the case may be, if in the hand of fourth player. Holding, however, king, *jack*, and one or more small, or king, *queen*, and *two* or more small, we play small, as partner remaining in the one case with ace, queen, 10, in the other with ace, jack, 10, the card led, the 9, will hold the trick or force a trump.

Holding queen or jack and small cards, 9 being led, unless desiring to signal, or, holding

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four, to unblock, we play our smallest card, taking care, however, to rid ourselves of the high card before there is danger of its blocking. The play of queen or jack, as the case may be, would be entirely superfluous, it being in direct sequence with the card led, 9, and the cards declared by the lead in partner's hand.

It would seldom if ever be right, being void of partner's suit, to trump his original lead of an honor, 10, or 9, the same not being covered by second hand. Even then, if holding four trumps, we should carefully consider if we could not better use them in an effort for the protection of the suit.

More or less difficulty surrounds at times the course of third-hand player with regard to the proper play on the lead of a thirteener.

A THIRTEENER is the last card of a suit remaining in play.

If we may assume that the card is led for the purpose of forcing us in order, perhaps, that our own and partner's trumps may make separately, we should put up our highest trump, second hand not having trumped with a higher one than we

### THIRD HAND

hold, and trumps not being exhausted from fourth player; if for the purpose of forcing fourth player, this player having developed trump strength, we should pass the trick, second hand having passed.

A thirteener is occasionally led for the ostensible purpose of *placing the lead*. Reference to this maneuver will be found under the heading of CRITICAL ENDINGS. When an object of this nature makes itself apparent, we must endeavor correctly to judge where the lead would be most effective, and govern our play accordingly. If with second player, in order that partner be led up to on the next round, we should refuse to overtrump, assuming this player to have trumped; if with fourth player, in order that we be led up to on the next round, we should pass the trick, second player having passed.

Somewhat similar reasoning governs one's play on the lead of a twelfth card—TWELFTH CARD being the last card but one of a suit yet in play.

If the card led be the commanding card and second player follows suit or renounces, it will hold the trick or force a trump from fourth

## STANDARD WHIST

hand; unless wishing the lead, therefore, it would be right generally to pass the trick; especially would this be right in cases where fourth player has developed trump strength. If the card led be the losing card and second player plays the command, we should put up generally our highest trump, unless having reason to believe that a smaller one will be just as effective; if the card led be the losing card and fourth player holds the command, our lowest, unless overtrumping second hand.

A brief reference before concluding to the FINESSE BY THE RULE OF ELEVEN.

The opportunities for making this finesse are not only of infrequent occurrence, but it is rarely advisable when they do occur that the finesse be made. When, however, we thereby incur no special risk and yet publish important inferences, it is right generally to make it.

The following furnishes a typical example. Partner opens up his suit with the 7, thus marking four cards higher against him. We, holding queen, jack, 10, and one or more smaller cards of the suit, at once recognize that our own hand

### THIRD HAND

contains all but one of these four higher cards; furthermore, that the *missing* higher card must of necessity be either ace or king, as if *both* ace and king were in the hand of partner, one of these cards rather than fourth best would have been originally led. Our ostensible play, therefore, is to pass the 7, as, whether it hold the trick, or fall to king or ace in the hand of fourth player, partner must gain valuable inferences concerning the special distribution of his suit.

This cannot be otherwise, as fourth player by his failure to win the trick in the one case, or by winning with as high a card as king or ace in the other, shows first, his inability to win at all; secondly, his inability to win with a smaller card. Second player, by his failure to cover the card led, denies the unbroken sequence, queen, jack, 10. We, if holding simply one, or even two of these cards, would not have finessed the card led; our doing so, in fact, would have been extremely injudicious, utterly at variance with conscientious and correct third-hand play. Partner cannot but assume, then, that the complete sequence, queen, jack, 10, is held by us, and

## STANDARD WHIST

that, though the suit has been but once led, it is fully established in our two hands. The cases would be exceptional where this information could not be turned to the combined good.

The general principles which govern the play of third hand, are thus briefly summarized by Proctor:

“First, and chiefly, to help and strengthen one’s partner as much as possible in his own suit; secondly, to derive all possible advantage from any strengthening card one’s partner may play in one’s suit; thirdly, to retain as long as possible such partial command as one may have in an opponent’s suit.”

## CHAPTER VII

### FOURTH HAND

We maintain and believe and can easily prove that the proper study of whist affords higher and more satisfactory discipline than is obtained by the great majority of studies embraced in the curriculum of a university.—  
CASSIUS M. PAINE.

“Whist is essentially the game of scholars, wits, and philosophers.”

While to the player fourth in hand the opportunities for the display of individual skill are comparatively few, the rule to take the trick if possible (if against him), and as cheaply as possible, holding good in the great majority of cases, his position nevertheless is by no means that of a sinecure, and a correct comprehension of the situations wherein a contrary course becomes advisable calls for a thorough understanding of the conditions of the game and for whist perception and ability of no mean order.

## STANDARD WHIST

Developments may be of such a nature, or fourth player's hand may be so constructed, as to devolve upon him a responsibility the importance of which can be properly estimated only by one who possesses a thoroughly keen appreciation of the infinite vagaries of the complex game, when his play becomes the pivot upon the turning of which the success or failure of the partnership game depends.

Bearing in mind that we should under no circumstances refuse to win a trick, unless we see our way clear to making at least one additional one by so doing, it behooves us, in the vast number of cases, to win the trick if within our power to do so (it not having been already won by partner), and at as small an expenditure and outlay of strength as possible.

Cases may and do arise, however, where it becomes advisable to pass the trick, where such policy is absolutely essential to the successful finish of the game; where, in a word, the additional one, two, or more tricks, as the case may be, could be scored in no other way. It becomes necessary at times, too, though such cases are

## FOURTH HAND

undoubtedly rare, to pass not simply the one, but two, and even a greater number of tricks in succession.

The player, whatever be his position at table, who feels he must take the immediate trick under all conditions and regardless of developments, will find much to learn before he can hope or expect to arrive at any degree of rank or prominence in the world of whist.

Taking the Trick Already Partner's, Placing the Lead, The Grand Coup, etc., maneuvers one and all calling for the highest order of skill and delicate whist perception, are applicable at times to the play of fourth hand. These plays, which are equally applicable under similar conditions to the play of second and third hand, will be duly considered under the heading of CRITICAL ENDINGS, COUPS, etc.

## CHAPTER VIII

### RETURN LEAD

Play as if your partner's hand belongs to you, and your own belongs to your partner.—FISHER AMES.

To be able to read your partner's hand and play to make *his* cards is whist of the highest order.—C. D. P. HAMILTON.

We come now to another very interesting and exceedingly useful convention—the RETURN LEAD.

While this play admits of less variation and calls perhaps for less individual skill than most other plays, its correct observance requires, nevertheless, particularly under some conditions, quick adaptability, and demands that one be thoroughly familiar with recognized form, rules, etc.

The proper return lead is, in fact, a matter of high import, it being essential to the best interests of the two hands that the original leader of

## RETURN LEAD

a suit have it within his power as early as possible definitely to locate certain valuable cards, as well as to infer the number of the suit held by his partner, and the assistance he may or may not expect from him in his efforts at its establishment.

The conventional rules, subject to the modifications noted below, should in the majority of cases be strictly adhered to. They may be stated as follows:

*If remaining with two only at the time the lead is returned, return the better of the two; if remaining with three or more, return the lowest, save only when holding the command, or both second and third best.*

*Irrespective of number, return the command; so, also, irrespective of number, return second best when holding both second and third best.*

The importance in such cases of proclaiming in regard to number subordinates itself to the importance of at once ridding ourselves of the command, or of such a card as will work to the earlier establishment of the suit in partner's hand, and at the same time do away with the danger of blocking.

## STANDARD WHIST

To be sure, if we can detect that we are longer in the suit than partner, we play to establish the suit in our hand, and so make it a point to insure the command finally being with us rather than with him.

The return of the higher of two cards not only shows numerical weakness in the suit, but admits often of partner's making a successful finesse.

The return of the lowest of three points to the inexpediency of a finesse, as a suit in which both of us are long runs the risk of being early trumped.

Now for the exceptions above referred to. These plays, however, embody such obvious and well-known principles that, as Cavendish observes, "the word 'exception' hardly applies," and it were better perhaps to classify them as authenticated and well-established rules of play.

If, to partner's original lead of a high card, we, holding four of the suit, have begun to unblock, we return the highest rather than the lowest of the three remaining cards; otherwise, as has been explained in that portion of *THIRD*

## RETURN LEAD

HAND devoted to UNBLOCKING, we would do away with the benefits we originally set out to attain, and at the same time complete a call for trumps.

So, if to partner's original lead of a low trump, we, holding four or more trumps headed by cards in sequence, make an effort to win the trick and also to develop an echo (by the play of the higher rather than the lower of the cards in sequence) we complete the echo, if winning the trick, or so soon as we obtain a lead, by the return of the lower of the cards in sequence rather than lowest of the suit. The importance of this play will be dwelt upon more fully in the chapter on TRUMPS.

All the above, it will be understood, applies simply to the return of partner's lead, and in its full integrity, to his first or original lead. Considerably more latitude is allowed when returning the lead of an adversary, we being governed in such cases by developments from the previous round and by the importance as long as safe of retaining the command.

The question often arises, and naturally;

## STANDARD WHIST

“Shall we at once return partner’s suit, or is it better to declare our own?”

Cavendish advises our own if strong in trumps; partner’s if weak.

The consensus of opinion, however, regardless of the above-named conditions, is in favor of the return of partner’s; unless, to be sure, our own suit is ostensibly stronger, or unless we have strength in trumps when we should, mostly, proceed first to disarm the adversaries of trumps.

Milton C. Work pronounces the wonderful desire on the part of many players to change the suit to be one of the greatest failings of the average whister. He adds: “Our advice is when you have the lead, having won a trick third in hand, be absolutely sure it is the wisest play to shift the suit before you decide to do so, and if there is any doubt in your mind on the subject, give the benefit of the doubt to the suit that has just been led. Remember every time you open a new suit you place yourself at a disadvantage, unless it is headed by a three-card sequence of which the queen is a component part. Remem-

## RETURN LEAD

ber that to attempt to establish two suits is the height of folly and that, as your partner has already started to establish his, you will, as a rule, do better to aid him in that effort rather than start off on a new tack with your own suit, which is one trick farther from establishment than your partner's. If you do not return your partner's suit, you virtually say to him, 'Partner, in spite of the disadvantage of opening up a new suit, and in spite of the fact that yours has already once been led, mine can be more easily established than yours, and therefore I assume the responsibility of shifting.' The old doctrine of showing your partner your suit before returning his is one of the absurdities of the past that is dead. That the same authors should tell us to play two hands as one, and yet play them in this way at cross purposes, seems, indeed, strange in the light of modern experience."

The objection which is sometimes raised to such a course, that partner is thereby left in ignorance of our own suit and is liable, therefore, to be in doubt when forced to change his lead as to the proper alternative, has but little force,

## STANDARD WHIST

the suits either directly or indirectly known to be opponent's, discards, and the various inferences therefrom, etc., directing one infallibly, usually, as to the proper conclusion. It is a well attested and established fact, and one which adds still another and certainly forcible argument in favor of the return of partner's suit, that a strengthening card led by partner to our inferred suit tends often much more effectually to the clearing and early establishment of the suit in our hand than if the suit were originally led by ourselves.

Whatever policy one adopt, however, the command of partner's suit should in most cases be returned without delay. There are in truth no whist principles of greater value intrinsically than those embodied in the rules to rid ourselves at once of the command of partner's, to retain as long as safe that of adversary's suit.

The old objection to the return of partner's lead when we have won the trick with as low a card as the queen, holding nothing higher, for the reason that the balance of strength is with the player to his left, to a considerable extent

## RETURN LEAD

loses its force if one may assume that his partner is familiar with the principle and play of the Obligatory Finesse. The same has been considered under THIRD HAND.

## CHAPTER IX

### TRUMPS

The player who at the critical juncture of the game correctly manages his trumps, masters the situation; when the reverse is the case, the situation masters him.

“Trumps are the ordnance—the heavy guns—in the engagement, and after you have silenced the enemy with them you may gather in the fruits of victory with your established suits.”

The considerations which enter into and affect the play of trumps are radically different from those which affect plain suits, and are so manifold, varied, and complex, that not only the tyro but the player of acknowledged skill not infrequently finds himself in doubt—uncertain quite what tactics and line of action to pursue.

Who has not upon more than one occasion tried vainly to settle whether his trumps and his hand generally justified an immediate trump lead; whether, in short, his policy throughout

## TRUMPS

should be aggressive or the reverse; at what stage of the game a trump *should* be led—as Hamilton asserts: “A trick too soon or a round too late may utterly ruin a great game”; whether it were right to force partner; whether a cross ruff could be established; whether he were forcing the strong adversary or the reverse, and so on through countless queries of a somewhat similar and more or less speculative nature.

All players of experience, all writers and authorities, agree as to the difficulties experienced in the management of trumps. Cavendish pronounces it “the most difficult of the problems presented to the whist player.” Hamilton affirms, “There is no test of skill so absolute as the aptitude displayed by a player in handling his trumps.” Coffin refers to them as the “artillery of the hand the proper maneuvering with which ordnance requires the greatest skill and generalship on the part of the player.”

To make the most of any deal it is absolutely essential that one be fully impressed with the intrinsic value of the trump suit; with its trick-making powers as compared with the plain suits;

## STANDARD WHIST

more than all perhaps with the significant fact that one's best laid schemes are often thwarted, not alone because of the superior trump strength held by an adversary, but because of the adroit manner in which he uses and skillfully adjusts to the needs of the situation these wonderfully subtle and at all times powerful agencies.

So much has been written and said upon the proper handling and management of trumps, and after all so much depends upon the developments of the game and upon the ingenuity and judgment of the player based upon these developments, that it is useless to attempt anything further in these pages than a brief recapitulation of the more important of the general truths, maxims, principles, and conventions by which their play is to a certain extent at least regulated and governed.

The distinctive purposes to which trumps are applied may be briefly summed up as follows: **First, PURPOSES OF PROTECTION; secondly, RUFFING PURPOSES; thirdly, IN ORDER TO STOP AN ACTUAL OR IMPENDING CROSS RUFF; fourthly, TO THE PURPOSES OF AN ORIGINAL LEAD**—they

## TRUMPS

being entitled perhaps to precedence in this respect over the plain suits, as constituting the longest, if not the only long suit which the hand contains.

There can be little doubt of the peculiar dignity which attaches to the first use—the lead for the purpose of protection. While the lead from four or more trumps with this specific object in view is frequently resorted to, a lead from three, two, and even one trump with the same object in view, is at times justifiable; from three, when holding great strength in *one*, and protection in *both* of the two remaining suits; from two, when holding *great*, and from one (seldom, if ever, as a *first* lead except it be the ace of trumps) when holding *overwhelming* strength in *all* the plain suits. The weaker the trump suit in cases of this description, the stronger, imperatively so, the plain suits must be. Leads of this nature, when employed by players who thoroughly understand what they are about, become frequently as forceful, sharp-edged weapons to the peculiar incisiveness of which discomfited opponents can fully attest.

## STANDARD WHIST

When our own or partner's suit becomes established, and occasionally when it reaches that point where another round will establish it, it behooves us carefully to review the situation to see if we have strength sufficient to warrant us in an attempt at protection. The attempt undoubtedly should be made, no trump strength having been declared by opponents, if we hold as many as four trumps with possibly one card of re-entry at least of another suit.

(CARD OF RE-ENTRY is such a card as insures our again obtaining a lead.)

With fewer trumps than four, the attempt at protection, the suit being established, is often-times justifiable, particularly if we also hold considerable strength in *one*, or moderate strength in *both* of the two remaining suits.

We must ever bear in mind, however, as forcibly set forth by Hamilton, that "*it makes a vast difference who is in the lead when the last trump is played.*" This becomes of special importance when the lead is for the purpose of bringing in an established suit, and more than ever so if we are void of re-entry in the other suits. To the

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accomplishment of this end we should not hesitate, the situation apparently demanding it, to finesse, and to finesse freely upon the return of the lead, holding up at times the commanding trump for one, two, and even a greater number of rounds. This policy becomes advisable occasionally though the trump lead originally came from opponents.

It is comparatively easy to establish a suit, but to bring it in is a much more serious undertaking, and a lead of trumps with this specific object in view, unwarranted by strength, results usually in the bringing in of the suit of an opponent. It behooves us, therefore, to weigh the conditions carefully and well before launching upon an attempt which, if unsuccessful, means not only signal defeat for our side, but assured victory for the opposing side.

## THE RUFFING SYSTEM

is usually quite effective, particularly when what is known as a Cross Ruff can be established.

## STANDARD WHIST

### A CROSS RUFF,

than which, as John T. Mitchell asserts (John T. Mitchell is the leader of the duplicate whist movement in America), "there is nothing more deadly," consists in the alternate trumping of partners; it is a form of play, that is, by which each of the two players trumps in turn a losing card of a suit which the other leads for that ostensible purpose.

When and when not to force partner is often-times a vexed question, and one which many of our best players have yet to interpret to their entire satisfaction. We are told to abstain from forcing partner if weak in trumps ourselves, and though this rule, like all others, is liable to important qualifications, Drayson, more than any other writer, perhaps, claiming that it should not be too stringently adhered to, it is nevertheless a pretty safe one to follow under ordinary conditions at least. Reasoning inversely from the above, it follows that when a good partner deliberately forces us we should take the force without hesitancy, secure in the belief that his

## TRUMPS

own hand fully justifies him in the course he is pursuing.

Contrariwise, when he refrains from forcing us, having had the opportunity, we read him with but little strength, and need not hesitate, therefore, as a rule, to force him should the opportunity to do so offer.

The theory has been advocated, those advocating it claiming that such a policy could leave a player in no doubt as to the true status of his partner's trump holding, that if weak in trumps, we should refrain when the opportunity first offers from forcing partner, but should unhesitatingly avail ourselves, if otherwise expedient, should a second one offer, partner, it being understood, being at liberty to accept or refuse the force as may seem for the best interests of his hand.

To be sure, when partner has signified his willingness to be forced, either by trumping a doubtful (or even a sure trick, not following it up with a trump lead) when he has refrained from forcing us though having had the opportunity, or when it is likely that we can thereby

## STANDARD WHIST

establish a cross ruff, the rule which proscribes forcing unless warranted by our own strength becomes null and void, and it is right generally to improve every chance which offers for the making of partner's trumps separately and apart from ours.

So, also, when trumps have been declared adversely, either by the lead of a trump or otherwise, it will be found well usually to resort to forcing, or to whatever other expedient offers for the best apparent interests of the two hands. Even under these conditions, however, unless the partner of the strong adversary shows also the possession of trump strength, or unless it is evident that they hold an established suit, with perhaps sufficient trump strength to bring it in—in either of which cases we would see at once that we could offer but little if any defense—we cannot always tell but that partner, too, may have strength, and it may be sufficient, if kept intact, to outlive the adversary. It is usually best, however, at such times to give him the option at least of trumping. He will fully understand the play, and will accept or refuse the

## TRUMPS

force as may seem best to him, he having it in his power, moreover, by whichever course he adopts, to put us in possession of inferences which will prove an invaluable guide in determining our subsequent policy.

The rule in regard to forcing applies like all rules in its full significance to the earlier or but partially developed stages of a game, considerations being liable to arise which render it imperative to disregard it entirely at a more advanced stage.

In view of the incalculable harm which can be done to a strong trump hand by repeatedly forcing it to trump, the policy of forcing the strong trump hand of the adversary whenever possible makes itself distinctly manifest. Should the player so forced refuse the force, it should be attempted again and again. Many a good trump hand and the prospects of a strong game have been so injured by repeated forcing, that the holder thereof has been compelled to abandon his tactics and resort to and pursue a line of play altogether at variance with that he originally intended.

## STANDARD WHIST

The course to pursue with regard to trumping, second in hand, and the impolicy of trumping, third in hand, an honor, or, in fact, any card higher than eight which partner leads as an original lead, unless covered by second hand, have been already considered under their respective headings, SECOND and THIRD HAND PLAY.

Having occasion to trump when holding four trumps, it is best usually to trump with third best, except when it is a relatively high card, as in the case of 10 from king, queen, 10, 3, and follow it up when next playing from the suit (not making an effort to win the trick) with fourth best—the latter play subject to contingencies which may arise in the event of the trump lead coming from opponents, and they either holding the trick, or it being evident that they *will* do so, when, in an effort to deceive as to number, fourth best as a general thing should be held until a later round, and second best played.

Having occasion to trump when holding five or more trumps, it is best as a rule to trump with fifth best, and follow it up, if the conditions then justify the lead of a trump, and of a low

## TRUMPS

trump, by the lead of fourth best. If the suit consist of more than five, partner will usually so infer from the absence of certain small cards, which, not being in his own hand, would otherwise doubtless have fallen from opponents.

If, after, as above explained, trumping with original fifth best, our holding justifies the lead of a high trump, such a card should be led as will proclaim the value and numerical strength of the suit, not as it originally was, but as it *now* is; in other words, we should ignore in our calculations the card or cards, as the case may be, which were used for trumping before the development of the lead.

Under no circumstances, if within our power to control the matter, except the game be so desperate that we must place the lead at all hazards, should we lead a suit of which both opponents are known to be void (the adverse trumps not being exhausted), as the weaker adversary will trump, while the stronger one by a judicious discard perhaps may further strengthen his hand.

The importance of leading trumps, regardless of high-card or numerical strength, in order to

## STANDARD WHIST

stop a cross ruff, actual or impending, is universally recognized. At such a juncture the earlier, perhaps, to obtain a lead, it is well frequently to resort to exceptional measures, and if holding high or commanding trumps to freely lead them, all other considerations becoming secondary, for the time being, to the importance of insuring as many rounds as we have it in our power to control, or as the extremity of the situation apparently may demand before there is danger of the lead going from us. Partner, for the same reason, if making an effort to win the trick (our lead being a low card and second player not having covered with a higher card than he holds) should invariably play his highest card (the cards heading the suit in his hand not being in sequence), not venturing the usual finesse even of queen from ace, queen, etc.

As we have thoroughly discussed the policy of our first or original lead being from our longest suit—when practicable, from one containing high card strength as well—it follows that when our longest suit is the trump suit (we being the *initial* leader, be it understood), we should lead from

## TRUMPS

it rather than resort to the doubtful policy of leading from a short suit. Even where our only four-card suit is the trump suit, the three plain suits consisting of three cards each, there is no reason, as a general thing, why the rule should be departed from.

A wide diversity of opinion exists on this point, many very strong players advocating rather the lead of one of the short suits, particularly if so constructed that it can be led from the top downwards.

Cavendish disposes of the question summarily and succinctly by pronouncing the trump lead "the lesser of the two evils."

George L. Bunn, the famous expert and eminent whist analyst, expresses himself as follows: "We have no sympathy for those players who refuse to lead a trump because 'I hold nothing to exhaust trumps for.' That is not the point; but even if it were, the argument is founded on a wrong premise; the game of whist is a partnership affair, and the player who plays his own hand alone has acquired an erroneous idea that will be fatal to his success as a player.

## STANDARD WHIST

But the best reason for the trump lead is that it is the only play that is not a shot on the dark; the only play that is based upon anything but pure luck. . . . It is not that it is a good lead in itself, except where the plain suits are strong, but that a lead from a short suit is worse; it is a choice between evils, the lesser of which we believe to be the trump lead."

This, in fact, correctly expresses it. Our guiding motive in such and similar cases should be, not so much to make a large score ourselves, as to prevent the adversaries from making a large score. Hands susceptible of brilliant treatment are the exception rather than the rule. If we but keep before us at all times and under all conditions the importance of doing, not simply that which promises the most brilliant, but that which offers the least doubtful results, our game will be a safe one, and one on which partner can implicitly rely, he having little to fear either from our adoption of erratic methods, or from our making unwarranted flights into the airy realm of the improbable. By the adoption, moreover, of such a course we shall soon acquire

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(and deservedly so) the reputation of being a thoroughly straightforward, earnest, reliable, and intelligent player.

It may be stated that when it can be detected, the lead of trumps is from four (or even five in suit), and resorted to solely because it is the only long suit which the hand contains—and to a discriminating partner such a situation will usually very soon make itself apparent—all obligations in regard to an immediate return become null and void unless one can see it is best for his own hand that trumps be at once exhausted. That is to say, when our initial lead of a low trump points to a holding of four, or at the most five, partner, when in the lead, can use his judgment with regard to going on with the suit, opening his own suit, or working for whatever end promises better returns than would be apt to follow upon the immediate withdrawal of trumps.

Other situations as well are liable to arise where the immediate return of the trump would be injudicious, but under usual conditions, and in the vast majority of cases, the rule demand-

## STANDARD WHIST

ing an immediate return is absolute and unconditional, and as such should be regarded. By beginners it should be religiously observed.

To be sure, if one hold an established suit, not of such length that there is danger of finding either opponent void, or of one round exhausting the only card of the suit held by his partner—a contingency which it would be particularly desirable to avoid in the event of his holding no re-entry in either of the other suits—he will sometimes find it to his advantage to declare first his own suit.

The lead of a trump, the trump suit consisting of less than five, is rarely wise if the hand contain a long, *unestablished* plain suit. Save only perhaps when we also hold considerable protection in *one*, or moderate protection in *both* of the two remaining suits, it will generally prove best, the trump suit consisting of four (or less) to work first for the establishment of the suit. It is occasionally advisable, too, to work first for the plain suit, though we hold five trumps, our policy in such cases being determined in fact

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rather by the strength of the plain suit than by the strength of the trump suit.

As will be seen, the old rule to lead trumps from five, regardless of the accompanying conditions, is no longer an arbitrary and absolute rule of the game. In fact, as Hamilton shrewdly affirms, "Always and never are not safe words to use in formulating whist rules, and when used they should be construed into meaning nearly always and hardly ever." The rule, however, as are most rules in truth, is a safe one for beginners; for all players, in fact, until, in the words of Drayson, "they have advanced beyond the condition of moderate players." The intuition and fine whist perception which are essential attributes of the player who departs successfully from any rule are the result usually only of continued practice and thoughtful and systematic study.

With a holding of as many as six trumps, there can be but little doubt generally as to the expediency of the immediate trump lead.

Whenever one adversary renounces to the trump suit unless it be extremely desirable that

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the remaining adversary be at once disarmed, it is best usually to discontinue the lead, and devote our efforts rather to making our own and partner's trumps separately.

Sometimes, though, when it is right hand adversary who is void, a continuance of the lead through left hand is advisable for the reason that it may either force him to put up his best, or enable partner to win the trick with a comparatively low card.

The importance as long as expedient of retaining the command of the trump suit, and to this end of playing a *backward* game, unless possessed of a certain specified holding, has been fully referred to under the heading of TRUMP LEADS. It remains but to add that the same policy should be observed generally also in the case of a plain suit, not previously opened, if holding a sure re-entry, in cases where there are no trumps remaining adversely.

THE TRUMP SIGNAL,  
the invention of Lord Henry Bentinck, is a command to partner to lead trumps.

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The command is arbitrary, and the partner of the player giving the signal is warranted often in running unusual risks, thereby the earlier perhaps to obtain a lead and give compliance.

The trump signal is made by the play of a higher card to the first round of a suit than to the second, when there can be no possible motive, and partner cannot but so read, for the play of the higher card, other than the desire to signal.

As explained under **SECOND HAND**, the best interests of second-hand play often demand that the card led be covered; hence the play by second hand of a higher card to the first round of a suit than to the second by no means of itself constitutes a trump signal. The card so played must be *unnecessarily* high, and partner must so construe it, or serious damage to the two hands may easily be the result. In the words of Milton C. Work, "There is no play more fatal than a trump lead made because a player thinks his partner has started a signal when in reality he has not."

As a matter of fact, there has been much

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opposition of late to the trump signal (in its ordinary acceptation, that is), a number of advanced players who, however, in various ways can determine when a trump should be led, claiming that it is of minor importance, and apt seriously to interfere with many of the finer points of play.

There can be little doubt, however, of the efficacy of the signal, particularly so far as the more moderate player is concerned, he of necessity lacking the perception possessed by the player of larger and more varied experience, and dependent, therefore, to no inconsiderable extent upon ulterior aids for his guidance and direction.

In the words of Fisher Ames, however, the signal "must be used with discretion." It should in fact never be attempted without due thought and consideration. It should be borne in mind that we may often lead a trump from considerably less strength than warrants us under ordinary conditions in giving the signal. The signal issues to partner a command absolute to abandon his own tactics and make his game in

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every way subservient to ours. This, as can be seen, involves upon us a responsibility of no light nature; hence it behooves us to be reasonably well assured, at least, that a trump lead will be for the best combined interests.

The strength conceded necessary to give the signal is *a holding of six, with or without an honor, or of five with at least one honor, there existing a reasonable chance of our side developing a good plain suit; or a holding of four with at least two honors, or of five even without an honor, if our suit be already established.* These are the more conservative rulings, and those specially approved by Miss Wheelock.

Others again set down the strength required as *five, one of them an honor, or four, two of them honors, the chances, as above stipulated, being favorable to the development of a suit.*

These holdings, be it understood, refer to the strength on the *original* ask, or early in a hand. A signal given at a later stage, after we have had a lead and refrained from leading a trump, or after we have had the chance to give the signal and have not given it, implies probably the

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possession of moderate strength and the belief that owing to developments, perhaps to the fact of our own or partner's suit having become established, or nearly so, or to the expediency of protecting high or commanding cards, a trump lead would in our opinion work to the best interests of the two hands

The policy of giving the signal when a strong suit has been shown adversely is extremely doubtful. To say nothing of the stray tricks which each adversary would endeavor to gain by ruffing, they would both be on the alert to detect the suit in which we are weak, and when detected would subject us whenever possible to repeated forcing, thereby rapidly reducing our original strength.

The signal may be begun in each plain suit until completed in one. When once completed, it should not be again given.

The signal is made usually with the two lowest cards of a suit. If, however, it becomes expedient to signal in a suit in which it is expedient also to unblock—this has been considered under THIRD HAND—we play to the first round of the suit our

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second best card, and to the second round, our third best, retaining the lower card or cards of the suit until a subsequent round.

If expedient to signal in the *discard*, we follow again the recognized form of the play of an unnecessarily high card, followed either when the suit is led, or when again discarding from it, by a smaller one.

*The discard of a high card*—some claim as high as an 8—*of an unopened suit* early in a hand, or on or before the fourth trick, gives indication usually of a strong suit; in fact, constitutes virtually a trump signal. This is known as the **SINGLE DISCARD CALL**.

A somewhat similar significance attaches in the early stages of a game to *the play of an honor, or even of a 9 or 10, on a higher card already played to the trick*.

The special play in each of these cases is either intended as the beginning of a signal, or the player so playing is of necessity void, or nearly so, of the suit led. His hand contains—that is, if the play be not intended as the beginning of a signal—presumably but three suits (in

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the case of the discard this is unequivocally so) and yet nearly the usual complement of cards. Each of these suits must of necessity have fair numerical strength, or one, possibly two of them, the chances being not unlikely that one is the trump suit, have exceptional numerical strength.

These being the conditions, the cases would be of infrequent occurrence where the lead of a trump, more particularly of a strengthening trump, would not redound to one's advantage; therefore it behooves the partner of the player so playing, if in the lead, or when obtaining it, to carefully consider the advisability of a trump lead.

*The failure to trump a sure adverse trick* is also under ordinary conditions a call for trumps.

The failure to trump a doubtful trick is not necessarily a call for trumps, but implies usually four, possibly five trumps, or three good ones which it is thought best to preserve intact. As there is no play more ill-advised perhaps than the attempt to force a partner who shows an unwillingness to be forced (our own hand not justifying the play), it is generally best under

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such circumstances to lead the suit in which partner is evidently strong, especially if holding such a card of the suit as, if led, will presumably assist in its establishment. To be sure if we hold an established or nearly established suit of our own, we may preferably lead our own suit. Even then, however, it is best as a rule to lead to his suit before finally giving up the control of our own.

### THE FALSE CARD LEAD, OR CALLING THROUGH THE HONOR,

an invention of Drayson, is a form of play (otherwise a signal) which develops by the making on the part of the leader of an irregular or *false* lead, hence the name; either from a short suit, when the card led will proclaim the fact of its being irregular, or, as is perhaps the better method, by such a lead from his long plain suit, if he hold one, as, while it also proclaims an irregular lead, at the same time works to the establishment of the suit.

This signal is given when, by reason of the bearing of the card turned upon the leader's own

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holding, it becomes apparent that the lead will work more advantageously if made by his partner through the honor than by himself. It follows that when the partner of the leader can detect under such circumstances the irregularity of a lead—and Drayson tells us that never should third hand more closely watch his partner's original lead than when an honor is turned to his right—he should not venture any finesse, but should take the immediate trick, if within his power, in order at once to comply with the demand.

As the full efficacy of this signal consists in the continuance of the lead by one's partner (or original third hand) until the honor turned is played, or it becomes evident that it must fall to the next round, it need scarcely be stated that the original leader, if winning the trick, should on no account go on with the trumps himself, but on the contrary, should make every effort to get the lead again to his partner.

The mere circumstance of a player having strength in trumps, an honor being turned to his right, by no means establishes the fact of its

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being better to give the signal than to lead the trump himself. The play is justifiable in reality only when one holds a finessing combination over the honor turned, as ace, jack, 10, etc., or ace, queen, 10, etc., over king turned; or king, jack, 10, or 9, over queen turned. Many players, especially those of moderate caliber, carry this play to excess, and refuse absolutely to lead the trump themselves, an honor being turned to their right, no matter how little adapted their suit may be to the chances of a successful finesse, or how strongly the best interests of the hand demand apparently an immediate trump lead.

To refrain from leading a trump, the hand otherwise justifying a trump lead, simply because an honor is turned to one's right, is unsound play, and equally unsound perhaps is the lead of a trump simply because an honor is turned to one's left. Either is right if the conditions of the hand otherwise make it right; either is wrong if the conditions of the hand otherwise make it wrong.

The card to lead, however, an honor being

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turned to one's right or left, varies by reason of the bearing of the card turned upon the leader's holding. This has been referred to under TRUMP LEADS.

### THE CARD TO LEAD IN RESPONSE TO A SIGNAL,

though, to be sure, governed to some extent by the rank of the card turned, is governed usually by the same considerations which govern the return of a lead, namely, one's numerical holding.\*

*If holding three trumps or less, as in other cases where we lead to known strength in the hand of partner, we lead from the highest downwards, freely giving him, to indulge in a seeming paradox, of the strength of our weakness.*

*If holding four trumps, or more—this covers as well cases where, holding originally four, one was used for ruffing before the development of the signal—we lead the lowest, save only when holding the command, or an original high card lead, when, in*

\* Regardless of number, we should lead a strengthening card, if holding one, if the signal develops by the making of a false card lead.

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*the one case, we lead the command; in the other, the conventional high card from the particular combination.*

As it is of paramount importance that a player who leads or calls for trumps, be enabled to infer as early as possible as to the number of trumps held by his partner, what is known as the echo has been devised.

### THE ECHO

an invention of Cavendish, is, as the term indicates, an extension of the signal; in other words, an answer to the call.

The echo which is made in the same manner as the signal, by the play of an unnecessarily high card, followed by a smaller one, proclaims four trumps at least.

The echo should be made without delay, in the trump suit if led and it be practicable, or in the first plain suit which is thereafter led.

If holding originally four trumps, one was used for ruffing before the lead or signal developed, we should still echo to show numerical strength at the start.

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The manner of giving the echo develops in a variety of forms, and affords opportunities at times for extremely pretty and adroit play. If given in the trump suit, and when there is no bid for the trick, if made, not necessarily with the two lowest trumps, but with third and fourth best—unless third best be of such value that its use in this way might involve the loss of a trick—we can often proclaim the precise number we hold. If partner, for instance, lead queen and then ace of trumps, and we, holding the 5, 4, 3, and 2, first play 3 and then 2, we echo precisely four. If, however, holding the 6, 5, 4, 3, and 2, we again play third best, 4, and then fourth best, 3, we echo five.

The special value of this system of echoing lies, it will be seen, in one's ability to note and draw correct inferences, not alone from the cards which *have* been played, but from those which have *not* been played. Negative inferences are in every particular as significant and as deeply pregnant with meaning as are positive ones, and until we arrive at a proper appreciation of this fact we are still lacking in one of

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the first essentials to the making of a sound, capable, and satisfactory player.

If partner having called, we are forced, holding four trumps, we take the force with third best, and in answer to the call lead fourth best—the suit not containing an *honor* or a *finessing* card. If either of the latter conditions prevails, while we still take the force with third best, we lead preferably the high card.

If partner having called, we are forced holding five or more trumps, we take the force with fourth best, and in response to the call, lead fifth best, holding up whatever smaller cards of the suit the hand may contain.

If, however, our holding include *ace*, or *an original high-card lead*, while we would still in the generality of cases take the force with fourth best, we would respond to the signal in the one case by the lead of *ace*, followed by fifth best, in the other by the conventional high card from the particular combination.

When previous play has made it evident that the player to our left also is void of the suit led, obvious departures from the above form become

## STANDARD WHIST

advisable, and regardless of number, we trump with our highest trump (the cards heading the suit not being in sequence) and respond to the signal, if holding the trick, or when in the lead, by the lead of lowest.

The echo develops in cases where, our trumps being headed by cards in sequence, we make a bid for the trick, by the play of the higher and the return of the lower of the cards in sequence heading the suit.

This form of play which for ostensible reasons is specially valuable when the card played is next in sequence to the turned trump (we having turned the trump) or when, holding cards of immediate re-entry in suit, it is likely, in the event of the card played not holding the trick, that we will soon obtain a lead and thus be enabled to complete the echo, and to show the card immediately below the one played, which partner might otherwise suppose against him, may be objected to as being directly opposed to the rule for return leads which specifies the return of the lowest, if remaining with *three* or more of partner's suit, save only when holding

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the command, or an original high-card lead. As the echo in itself, however, is a proclamation of numerical strength, the information which by the return lead is intended to be conveyed, in reality develops in the simplest and most effective manner possible.

The advantage of the echo is manifold whether considered from a positive or a negative standpoint. It guides the leader as to the location of the remaining unplayed trumps; as to the expediency of taking a force and still going on with the lead; as to when the lead should be discontinued, etc.

The non-development of the echo, on the other hand—the failure to echo denies four trumps—warns him to husband his strength if but moderately strong, especially if it be important that the adversaries be completely disarmed; it also points at times to the inadvisability of going on with the lead, owing to the probability that one of the players is as strong if not stronger than himself.

## THE SUB-ECHO

is a proclamation of three trumps.

The sub-echo which, in the words of Nicholas Browse Trist, its inventor, is "another instance of progressiveness of whist language," can be made at any stage of the game, when, one's previous play having negatived the holding of four trumps, it cannot be construed as an echo proclaiming four.

As an illustration let us assume a small trump to be led by partner, the trick being won by opponent. An adverse suit is led which goes for two rounds. We do not echo. We deny, therefore, the holding of four trumps. Another suit is led which also goes two rounds. In this suit we echo. As we failed to echo at first opportunity, our play constitutes, not an echo, proclaiming four, but a sub-echo, proclaiming three.

Again:—Partner as before leads a small trump. With a holding, say, of king, 10, and one small, we win with king and return 10. As by the rank of the card we return, we deny the holding of

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four trumps, we have but to echo in the usual manner in the first plain suit thereafter led, and the play again constitutes, not an echo, proclaiming four, but a sub-echo, proclaiming three.

Still again:—Partner leads a trump which is adversely won, the opponent winning leading a plain suit which goes for three rounds. We, holding in the suit say, the 2, 3, and 4, play 2; this denies the holding of four trumps. If to the second round, then, we play 4, and to the third round 3, the play again resolves itself into a sub-echo, proclaiming three.

## CHAPTER X

### THE DISCARD

"To play whist with skill is both an intellectual and a moral discipline."

We must speak by the card or equivocation will undo us.—*HAMLET*, Act V., Scene I.

When we have no card of the suit led and do not trump, we play a card of another suit, generally the lowest of the suit which our hand contains. This play constitutes a **DISCARD**, a play of the greatest value, and owing to the varied significance which under different conditions it assumes, one which calls for the gravest and most thoughtful consideration.

The first discard is in reality an index to the hand and of but scarcely less importance than the first or original lead. As, necessarily, we weaken a suit by discarding from it, it stands to reason that under ordinary conditions and in

## THE DISCARD

the vast majority of cases, we discard from a suit in which we have but little strength; in other words, from one in which we are least liable to take a trick. Partner so construes the play and governs his own play accordingly; either abstaining altogether from leading the suit, or leading it (it being perhaps his own suit) in the full knowledge that he can expect but little if any assistance from us in his efforts at his establishment.

As there is no time during the play of a hand when we should not be guided by developments—a fact which every whist player instinctively appreciates—so, in the case of the discard, it becomes best occasionally to discard not from our weakest, but from our longest or best protected suit, the play under these conditions constituting what is significantly termed

### A FORCED DISCARD

To explain:—When trump strength is declared adversely, we stand but little chance of *making*, that is, bringing in, our long suit. Save, therefore, for the opportunities it may give us of

## STANDARD WHIST

forcing, this suit becomes usually of little or no practical value. When, under these conditions, then, making a discard, it is undoubtedly best to discard from our long suit, rather than from our shorter or weaker ones, not only as a direct means of communication to partner as to what constitutes our strongest suit, but, perhaps the more forcible reason of the two, in order securely to guard whatever high-card strength it may chance we hold in the shorter suits, the inference being not unlikely that the adverse lead of trumps will result otherwise in the bringing in of one or the other of these suits. While with trumps declared strongly against us, we can as a rule offer but little defense, it is nevertheless unwise to concede any victory without a struggle, and the end in view justifies certainly the means employed.

Briefly summed up, then, the general rules for discards may be stated as follows:

*When trumps are in one's favor, or, at all events, have not been declared against one, discard first from weakest suit, when the reverse is the case, from longest or best protected suit.*

## THE DISCARD

*In later discards, aim simply for the best protection of the hand, as Cavendish observes, "it being the original discard only which is directive."*

The original discard from our best suit, trumps being declared adversely, applies, it will be understood, in its full force to cases only where our suit has not been already declared. If we have previously led from it, we discard from it or not, as the best interests of the hand seemingly may demand.

Confusion may occasionally arise as to whether the preponderance of trump strength is in reality with partner or with opponent, as in cases for instance, where the trump lead which originated with opponent, is taken up and continued by partner, and vice versa. This particular phase of the question of discards has from time to time occasioned considerable discussion and opposing theories have been variously advanced. The consensus of opinion, however, is in favor of the discard in the one case being from the weakest, in the other from the strongest suit, on the theory in the one case that partner, by a continuance of the lead, declares also the possession of

## STANDARD WHIST

strength, and, it may be, sufficient to outlive the adversary; in the other, that a similar avowal of strength is made by adversary.

It is inadvisable as a rule to make more than one discard from our long suit unless it contain at least six cards, or unless our greater security apparently lies in the protection of queen twice guarded, or jack or 10 three times guarded, of the suit which is evidently opponent's. It will sometimes happen, for instance, in the end play of a hand, that, being left with two suits only, one of which is established, our only hope of making even one card of the established suit is dependent upon the single chance of our obtaining a lead through a high card once, twice, or even three times guarded of the remaining suit. In such and similar cases we discard, it is needless to say, conformably to the situation, unhesitatingly throwing away one, two, or whatever number of cards of the established suit the exigencies of the case may demand.

When partner may be in doubt as to which of two suits constitutes our best, we can often point to it infallibly, if put to two discards, by dis-

## THE DISCARD

carding in turn from each of the two remaining suits. Such policy should not be resorted to, however, if at the possible sacrifice of any strength in either suit which may be necessary to the final bringing in of the suit. When a doubt of this nature exists it will usually develop —this being in accordance with the doctrine of probabilities—that the suit in which partner has the least strength is the one in which we have the greatest.

*The discard to show command*, as when holding, for instance, ace, jack, 9, 4, 3, is made by the play first of a higher, and when next playing from the suit of a lower card of a suit; by such a play, in other words, as would constitute ordinarily a trump signal. It is perhaps superfluous to explain that this form can be employed only when there is no possibility of its being construed as in any manner having reference to trump strength—trumps either being exhausted, or previous play having conclusively shown that no such construction can be placed upon it.

So, also, it would be unwise to employ it if the card which must be first played—third or

## STANDARD WHIST

fourth best, accordingly as the suit contains four or five cards—is of such value that the play might result in loss.

*The discard preparing to show command, or re-entry, as when holding, say, king, queen, etc., develops in the same manner as the above—by the play of an unnecessarily high card followed by a lower one.*

Such discards can be made at any stage of the game when, as above explained, they can have no reference to trump strength, and they apply equally to one's long suit and to short suits.

*The discard of a singleton, or a discard from a suit consisting of ace and one other card only, or of an honor lower than ace and one other card only, the two latter plays known respectively as BLANKING AN ACE and UNGUARDING AN HONOR, should, if possible, be studiously avoided, especially in the early and but partially developed stages of a game. The discard of a singleton deprives us of our only means of assisting partner in the suit should it turn out—a condition quite probable—that this were his best suit. Moreover, the early proclamation of*

## THE DISCARD

weakness in any suit subjects us throughout to adverse finessing in the suit. When, however, trump strength is in our favor, we may unhesitatingly resort, if need be, to any of the above-named expedients, under such conditions it being not only of the greatest importance that we direct partner absolutely as to our best suit, but there being infinite wisdom in preserving it intact.

*A discard from a suit in which partner has declared strength (we being numerically weak in the suit)* calls at all times for due discretion; especially so when there is but one remaining trump and it is held adversely. If the adversary holding it suspects our weakness, he will persistently hold up the trump (unless he or his partner have an established suit, and the latter being the case, he is able to put his partner in the lead) until he can read us with no more, for, thus depriving us of the power to go on with the suit should we later obtain a lead, he reduces to a minimum partner's chances of bringing the suit in.

Due care also should be observed regarding

## STANDARD WHIST

the discard from partner's suit, though we, too, are numerically strong in the suit—holding, that is, as many as four. Otherwise, as has been explained in connection with UNBLOCKING THIRD-HAND PLAY, we may block the suit.

A discard from a tenace suit is an artifice resorted to at times—this is not regarded as a specially high order of play—in the hope that left-hand adversary, agreeably to the principle of leading to supposed weakness in the hand of fourth player, may be induced to lead the suit—generally to our manifest advantage. So, also, with the same object in view, we discard occasionally from our best suit in cases where it has been shown that partner is void of the suit, or where it is unlikely that he will obtain a lead.

When, toward the end of a hand, it is apparent that we will be put to two or more discards—trumps perhaps being exhausted, and opponent, or partner, being in the lead with possibly an established suit—it will be found better as a rule, if holding two suits of about equal strength, to discard from one of them exclusively, rather than to so weaken both as to render ourselves

## THE DISCARD

unable perhaps to take a trick in either. We can often take our clew, too, in cases of this nature (the lead being with opponent) from partner's discard, discarding on our part from the suit he retains, and conversely, retaining the one he discards.

*The discard of the command of a suit except for the purpose of unblocking—the suit being partner's—points to the complete control of a suit.*

*The discard of second best of a suit proclaims no more. This, too, subject to contingencies liable to arise in the end play of a hand as to the expediency of throwing high cards to avoid the lead.*

As has been explained in the chapter on TRUMPS, *the discard of a high card of an unopened suit early in a hand, or on or before the fourth round, constitutes virtually a trump signal.*

## CHAPTER XI

### THE COMMAND ON THE THIRD-ROUND SIGNAL

The command on the third-round signal is a form of play made in the same manner as the trump signal by the play of an unnecessarily high card followed by a lower one of the same suit, and it can therefore only be employed when there is no danger of its being so construed—trumps either being out or the remaining ones marked with adversaries or partner. It applies usually to cases where, holding perhaps queen and two or more smaller cards, the higher cards of the suit are played to the first two rounds. This signal issues to partner a command to come with the suit a third round.

A similar form of play which also issues to partner a command to come with the third round of the suit is employed in cases where, holding two small cards of a plain suit and the losing trump, the remaining trumps are marked with adversaries or partner.

## CHAPTER XII

### CRITICAL ENDINGS, COUPS, ETC.

Know the rules and when to break them.—C. E. COFFIN.

There is as much art in whist as in diplomacy.—PRINCE METTERNICH.

Having considered in as condensed a manner as possible to be consistent with accuracy and clearness, the various maxims, truths, principles, and conventions a correct understanding of which is essential to the harmonious working out of the combined game of whist, it remains but to consider briefly some of the finer or more abstruse points of the game.

The opportunities for making some masterly stroke or brilliant coup are of comparatively rare occurrence. The player, therefore, who is intent upon the discovery of some unusual development, thinking to cover himself with glory for a play of exceptional brilliancy, is very apt

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completely to overlook some simpler development, the failure to take advantage of which may result in the loss of one or a greater number of tricks.

"Coups," in fact, as has been pertinently observed, "are exceptional plays the opportunities for making which the practiced player will perceive on occasion but will not hunt for." There can be no doubt, however, but that one possessed of the ability successfully to meet and cope with unusual situations when they do occur, turning to the advantage of himself and partner something which in the hands of a player of inferior caliber would be entirely valueless, possesses weapons of a masterly and effective sort, and is in every sense a partner to be sought and an adversary to be feared.

As Cavendish truly observes and as every player of experience fully appreciates, "There is no whist principle which should not be occasionally violated owing to the knowledge of the hands derived from inferences during the play." One can, in fact, evince no surer proof of a thoroughly sound, perfectly balanced and finely

## CRITICAL ENDINGS, COUPS, ETC.

poised player than in the ability "to play to the drop."

The card first led should always be conventional, and unless developments point to the expediency of a contrary course, the card led by each player when first he makes a lead, should usually also be conventional. As the game progresses, however, rules and conventions may be thrown to the winds. Individual judgment must come to the front and supply and govern what up to a certain point has been of necessity more or less mechanical.

The last few tricks are the crucial and critical points of the game. The battle of intellects waging constantly stronger and more strong, at this stage if ever, we require all our forces, tact, skill, and power. The weapons, so to speak, of accumulated knowledge, facts, and inferences with which we have been gradually arming and equipping ourselves during the course of the game must then be made to serve a quick, steady, and effective use. Unless this can be done the knowledge previously gained has been of little if any appreciable benefit.

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The situations which call for strategic treatment, in a word, which render departure from rule not only expedient but at times imperative are, by reason of their very nature, so exceedingly fine and oftentimes complex, that it is a matter of impossibility to reduce them within circumscribed limitations or rules. It is more than difficult to formulate a rule or rules for departing from rule. "If, however," as aptly observed by Pole, "a player can always bear in mind the reason why in the ordinary game he ought to do a certain thing, he will have but little difficulty in appreciating the cases as they arise, where the reason fails, and where, consequently, the established rule no longer applies."

As has been before stated, the last few tricks are the crucial points of the game.

To be in the lead under certain conditions at certain advanced portions of the game is to be at times in an exceedingly doubtful position—one which involves frequently greater loss than gain.

If, at the eleventh trick, for instance, we hold best and fourth best trumps to right opponent's

## CRITICAL ENDINGS, COUPS, ETC.

second and third best, it would never be right to overtrump third best. Such a play, by compelling the lead from us on the next round, would endanger the loss of both of the two remaining tricks, whereas, were the lead to come from adversary, as would be the case if we refused to overtrump, we would make them both. With the deliberate hope of deceiving as to the position of third best trump and thereby compelling the best, right opponent when finding himself thus hemmed in, would be entirely warranted in the play of a false card, second best rather than third best.

FALSE CARDS, or cards which are played contrary to the established rules and for the specific purpose of deceiving as to the true essentials of one's hand, are at times most effective, serving an end which could be attained in no other way. Nevertheless, as like dangerous weapons, their proper handling requires the utmost care, they should be resorted to but sparingly. Some writers condemn them altogether; others again, and the majority, agree that they are perfectly ruleable if used with discretion and only in cases

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where, without in any manner working injury to the hand of partner, they can be made to serve an effectual and judicious use.

Whenever, also at the eleventh trick, the only remaining trumps are equally divided between partner and left opponent—this being apparent from previous play—we should win the trick if within our power to do so, though already partner's, that we may on the next round give him the advantage of position, or tenace, over his right opponent.

### THE GRAND COUP,

an exceedingly ingenious and clever play, the successful application, however, of which calls for the keenest whist perception and the most absolute understanding of the exact situation on the part of the player who attempts it, has also for its object the avoidance of the lead at a critical stage, by reason usually of the danger otherwise of being compelled to lead up to a tenace or second best guarded in trumps in the hand of right adversary.

The play of the grand coup consists in ridding

## CRITICAL ENDINGS, COUPS, ETC.

ourselves of a superfluous trump either by trumping or overtrumping a trick already partner's, or by playing a lower trump on a trick which has been already trumped with a higher one.

A superfluous trump may be compared to an embarrassment of riches which imposes upon the holder a responsibility of the gravest nature and one which he would oftentimes gladly rid himself of could he see his way clear to so doing. Happy, indeed, then, is the player, who, foreseeing that he is powerful only for harm, rids himself early of the undesirable and inconvenient trump. The ability so to do is pronounced by Clay to be "the triumph of the great whist player."

It should be distinctly understood that if the player who attempts the grand coup, commits the error of retaining in his hand such a card of a plain suit as will inevitably put him in the lead at the critical round despite his efforts to avoid it, all his pains will go for naught, and he will be no better off than if he had retained the trump. When a contingency of this nature seems possi-

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ble, he should make it a point to rid himself as well of the high card of the plain suit.

This brings me to a consideration of what is known as

THROWING HIGH CARDS TO AVOID THE LEAD, another play which comes under the head of diplomatic or strategic play.

If, at the tenth trick, we hold not only the major tenace or second best guarded in trumps over right adversary, but two cards as well of a plain suit which he is leading, one of which may otherwise put us in the lead, it is imperative that we play the higher of the two, even though it be king or ace led—this constitutes, by the way, the typical example of this coup. This coup which develops in a variety of forms, while lacking entirely the element of loss, works frequently to one's gain.

### PLACING THE LEAD,

consists in the lead or play of a losing trump, or a losing card of a plain suit, though holding the command, in cases where again it is to our

## CRITICAL ENDINGS, COUPS, ETC.

manifest advantage to be led to, or through, rather than to be in the lead ourselves.

Properly placing the lead involves one of the subtlest and prettiest strategies of the game. This play is, in fact, a species of underplay,

### UNDERPLAY

being an extempore stratagem, the success of which is dependent chiefly upon the correct turning of inferences from previous plays.

Like all plays involving artifice, and therefore out of the usual order, underplay is resorted to in the hope of gaining thereby one or more extra tricks than could be gained by ordinary conventional play. Underplay, though occasionally resorted to on the first round of a suit, is more usually attempted on later rounds. It can be employed by any player at the table. The opportunities for indulging in underplay present themselves in a variety of phases, one of the most common perhaps consisting in the lead of a small card, though holding the command, through the unestablished suit of left adversary, in the hope that this player being induced to sus-

## STANDARD WHIST

pect the best card of the suit is to his left, will play a small one, with the result that partner will win the trick with a card which otherwise would be valueless, while we, at the same time, retain the command. This play is especially effective at times in the trump suit. In plain suits it is of necessity attended with more or less risk, and should be attempted but rarely, as if an opponent suspect the design he will put up his high card at once, and thus not only defeat the immediate object intended, but perhaps render the commanding card, owing to the probability of the next round of the suit being adversely trumped, liable to not win at all.

### DESCHAPELLES'S COUP,

so named after its inventor, Deschapelles, one of the best analysts and most brilliant players of his time, in fact pronounced by Clay to be "the first whist player beyond any comparison the world has ever seen," is an exceedingly bright play, which has for its ulterior aim the bringing in of partner's established suit.

Deschapelles's Coup consists in the lead of

## CRITICAL ENDINGS, COUPS, ETC.

king, queen, or jack from the top of a plain suit not previously opened, regardless of number of any special holding in the suit, in cases where trumps are either exhausted or we hold the only remaining ones, but have no established suit and no card of partner's established suit with which to put him in the lead.

The primary object of the play is at once to force out the higher card or cards of the suit which are held adversely, in the hope on a subsequent round of enabling partner to obtain the lead with some card of inferior rank in the suit which he may chance to hold; in other words, of enabling him, in the event of his holding such a card sooner or later to obtain the lead and bring in his established suit.

Deschapelles's Coup can usually be defeated by a refusal on the part of the adversary who holds the ace, more particularly if this be right-hand adversary, to part with the ace on the first round. Reasoning from the standpoint that our next lead from the suit will doubtless of necessity be a low card, that partner will thus be forced to put up his best, and, in the event of

## STANDARD WHIST

its falling to the superior card, will perhaps lose his only chance of re-entry, the adversary who holds the ace—if it be held adversely—should withhold it always on the first round if the motive of the play can be suspected. If ace be held by partner he may play it or not on the first round, as his judgment may dictate.

It will be found expedient occasionally toward the end of a hand to refuse to win with the last trump, or with the commanding card of a suit, in cases where trumps are exhausted the second round of an adverse suit, such refusal being based on the assumption that a third round will likely exhaust the partner of the player in whose favor the suit is declared, and so reduce to a minimum the chances of the suit being brought in.

Cases are apt to arise, too, toward the end of a hand where, two trumps only remaining in play, the losing one being in the hand of adversary, it would be unwise to draw it.

When and when not to draw the losing trump involves, as Drayson affirms, “one of the most delicate points in whist.” The play should be

## CRITICAL ENDINGS, COUPS, ETC.

governed not by mere speculative guess, but by absolute conviction; the player, then, upon whom rests this responsible play should be strongly equipped with all the inferences which previous play has developed.

If our own suit, or partner's, be established, and especially if, the latter being the case, we remain with a card of his suit with which to put him in the lead, or it is likely that he holds a re-entry, the question admits of no discussion; the trump should be drawn as a matter of course. So, also, there can be no doubt on the subject if the losing trump be in the hand of such adversary as holds an established suit, as, if he hold a re-entry in either of the other two suits, or even if his partner hold a re-entry, holding also a card of the established suit to lead him, no play whatever on our part can prevent the final bringing in of the suit.

If the losing trump, however, be in the hand of the partner of the adversary who holds the established suit, and who yet remains with a card of the suit to lead him—this having developed from previous play—the trump should not

## STANDARD WHIST

be drawn as a matter of course. Our aim rather should be to place the lead adversely in the belief, or at least hope, that another round of the adverse established suit will deprive the partner of the holder of the ability again to lead it, and thus reduce to a minimum the chances of the suit being brought in. This end we can usually attain by another round of our own or partner's unestablished suit. Frequently also this round will fully establish the suit.

When, in the end play of a hand, it is apparent that an unopened suit of which we hold four cards, headed by queen or jack, can go round but twice, two trumps being marked adversely, we insure the best chance of making two tricks in the suit by leading the card heading the suit rather than the lowest; treating the suit, in other words, as though it consisted of two cards only.

Contrariwise, it becomes best to lead the lower rather than the higher of an unopened suit of two cards, one not being ace, in cases where all the adverse remaining cards, save only one, which is doubtful, are known to be winning

## CRITICAL ENDINGS, COUPS, ETC.

cards. This in order that partner if holding the command may make no attempt at finesse, but secure the immediate trick. These plays, the wisdom of which is distinctly manifest, are comprehended under the general terms of

### TREATING LONG SUITS LIKE SHORT ONES, AND VICE VERSA

When, as is occasionally the case, the situation is so critical that our only hope of making anything of a score is dependent upon the single chance of finding partner strong in the suit in which we are weak, it is sometimes best to adopt defensive tactics throughout, and to this end to make our first lead from our weakest rather than from our best suit. This with the intent that partner may deeply finesse in the suit, and if winning the trick, open on his part from his weakest suit, that we in turn may finesse and go on with our original lead, etc.

From the foregoing, which embody, after all, but a few of the more important cases the proper management of which requires consummate tact and skill, as well as a thorough understanding

## STANDARD WHIST

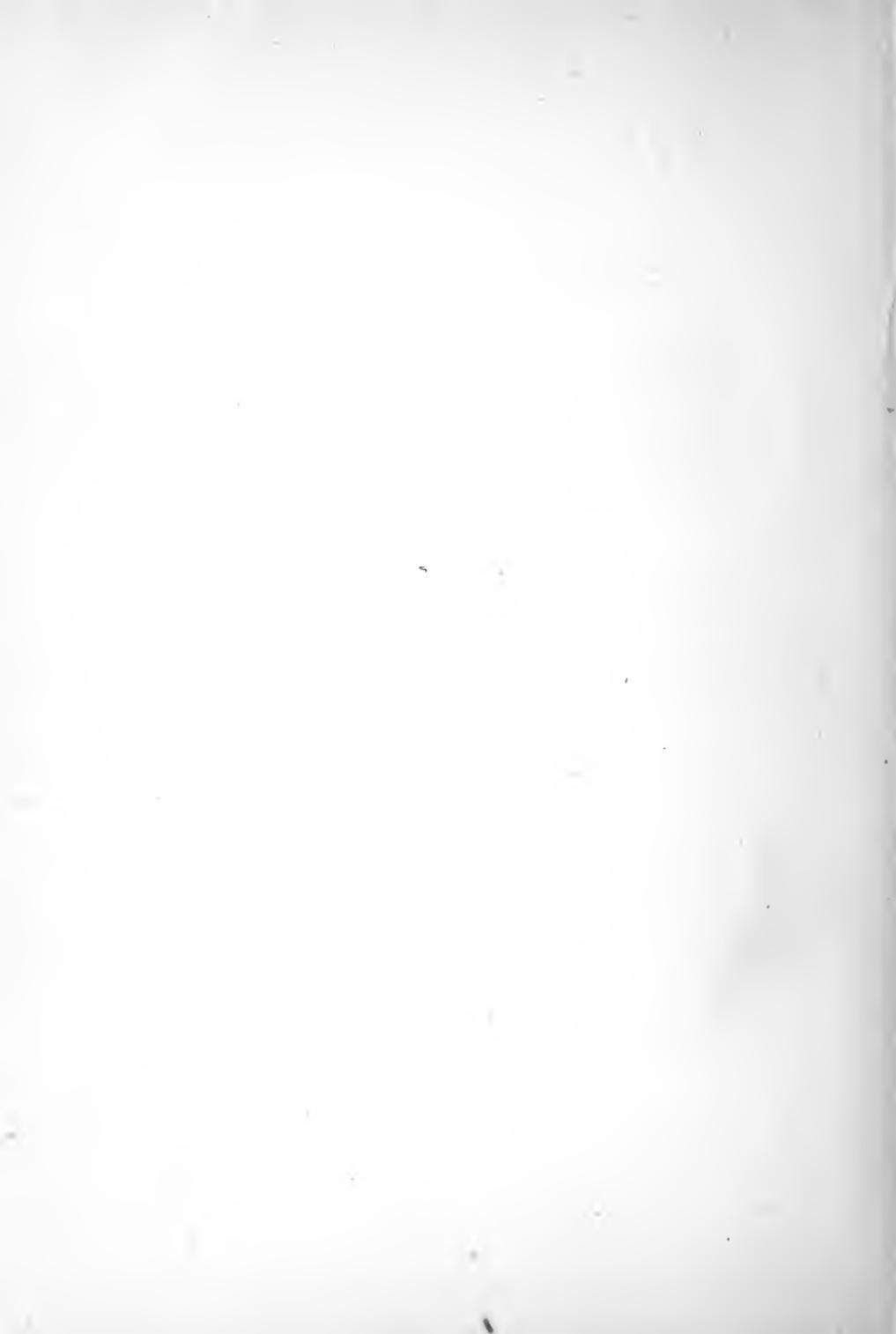
of the developments from previous play, one can form some idea, not only of the immense variety of this most wonderful of games, but of the wide range of intellect of which its play admits.

If a player had nothing to do but blindly to follow rule, if there were no risks to be run, no doubtful speculations to be entered upon—in a word, if there were no unexpected developments or unlooked-for contingencies, one of the strongest and most subtle charms to which the game can lay claim would be irretrievably lost, and the possessor of a good memory and a certain amount of mechanical ingenuity would find that no qualities more exalted were required in the make-up of a successful player.

It calls, however, for such infinite skill, ingenuity, address, perception, and *finesse*—in a word, so many highly philosophic and scientific points are closely involved that, in the words of the eminent novelist, “Ouida,” “A man who has trained his intellect to perfection in whist has trained it to be capable of achieving anything

## CRITICAL ENDINGS, COUPS, ETC.

that the world can offer. A campaign does not need more combination; a cabinet does not require more address, an astronomer-royal does not solve finer problems; a continental diplomatist does not prove greater tact."



# APPENDIX A

## THE LAWS OF WHIST,

AS REVISED AND ADOPTED AT THE  
THIRD AMERICAN WHIST CONGRESS,  
CHICAGO, JUNE, 1893

### THE GAME

1. A game consists of seven points, each trick above six counting one. The value of the game is determined by deducting the loser's score from seven.

### FORMING THE TABLE

2. Those first in the room have the preference. If, by reason of two or more arriving at the same time, more than four assemble, the preference among the last comers is determined by cutting, a lower cut giving the preference over all cutting higher. A complete table consists of six; the four having the preference play.

Partners are determined by cutting; the high-

## STANDARD WHIST

est two play against the lowest two; the lowest deals, and has the choice of seats and cards.

3. If two players cut intermediate cards of equal value, they cut again; the lower of the new cut plays with the original lowest.

4. If three players cut cards of equal value, they cut again. If the fourth has cut the highest card, the lowest two of the new cut are partners, and the lowest deals. If the fourth has cut the lowest card, he deals, and the highest two of the new cut are partners.

5. At the end of a game, if there are more than four belonging to a table, a sufficient number of the players retire to admit those awaiting their turn to play. In determining which players remain in, those who have played a less number of consecutive games have the preference over all who have played a greater number; between two or more who have played an equal number, the preference is determined by cutting, a lower cut giving the preference over all cutting higher.

6. To entitle one to enter a table, he must declare his intention to do so before any one of the players has cut for the purpose of commencing a new game or of cutting out.

# THE LAWS OF WHIST

## CUTTING

7. In cutting, the ace is the lowest card. All must cut from the same pack. If a player exposes more than one card, he must cut again. Drawing cards from the outspread pack may be resorted to in place of cutting.

## SHUFFLING

8. Before every deal the cards must be shuffled. When two packs are used, the dealer's partner must collect and shuffle the cards for the ensuing deal, and place them at his right hand. In all cases the dealer may shuffle last.

9. A pack must not be shuffled during the play of a hand, nor so as to expose the face of any card.

## CUTTING TO THE DEALER

10. The dealer must present the pack to his right-hand adversary to be cut; the adversary must take a portion from the top of the pack and place it toward the dealer; at least four cards must be left in each packet; the dealer must reunite the packets by placing the one not removed in cutting upon the other.

11. If, in cutting or reuniting the separate

## STANDARD WHIST

packets, a card is exposed, the pack must be re-shuffled by the dealer and cut again; if there is any confusion of the cards or doubt as to the place where the pack was separated, there must be a new cut.

12. If the dealer re-shuffles the pack after it has been properly cut, he loses his deal.

### DEALING

13. When the pack has been properly cut and reunited, the dealer must distribute the cards, one at a time, to each player in regular rotation, beginning at his left. The last, which is the trump card, must be turned up before the dealer. At the end of the hand, or when the deal is lost, the deal passes to the player next to the dealer on his left, and so on to each in turn.

14. There must be a new deal by the same dealer—

(a) If any card except the last is faced in the pack.

(b) If, during the deal, or during the play of the hand, the pack is proved incorrect or imperfect; but any prior score made with that pack shall stand.

15. If, during the deal, a card is exposed, the side not in fault may demand a new deal, provided neither of that side has touched a card.

## THE LAWS OF WHIST

If a new deal does not take place, the exposed card is not liable to be called.

16. Any one dealing out of turn or with his adversaries' pack, may be stopped before the trump card is turned, after which the deal is valid and the packs, if changed, so remain.

### MISDEALING

17. It is a misdeal—

(a) If the dealer omits to have the pack cut, and his adversaries discover the error before the trump card is turned and before looking at any of their cards.

(b) If he deals a card incorrectly and fails to correct the error before dealing another.

(c) If he counts the cards on the table or in the remainder of the pack.

(d) If, having a perfect pack, he does not deal to each player the proper number of cards and the error is discovered before all have played to the first trick.

(e) If he looks at the trump card before the deal is completed.

(f) If he places the trump card face downward upon his own or any other player's cards.

A misdeal loses the deal, unless, during the deal, either of the adversaries touches a card, or in any other manner interrupts the dealer.

## STANDARD WHIST

### THE TRUMP CARD

18. The dealer must leave the trump card face upward on the table until it is his turn to play the first trick; if it is left on the table until after the second trick has been turned and quitted, it is liable to be called. After it has been lawfully taken up, it must not be named, and any player naming it is liable to have his highest or lowest trump called by either adversary. A player may, however, ask what the trump suit is.

### IRREGULARITIES IN THE HANDS

19. If, at any time after all have played to the first trick, the pack being perfect, a player is found to have either more or less than his correct number of cards, and his adversaries have the right number, the latter, upon the discovery of such surplus or deficiency, may consult, and shall have the choice—

- (a) To have a new deal; or
- (b) To have the hand played out, in which case the surplus or missing card or cards are not taken into account.

If either of the adversaries, also, has more or less than his correct number, there must be a new deal.

## THE LAWS OF WHIST

If any player has a surplus card by reason of an omission to play to a trick, his adversaries can exercise the foregoing privilege only after he has played to the trick following the one in which such omission occurred.

### CARDS LIABLE TO BE CALLED

20. The following cards are liable to be called by either adversary:

(a) Every card faced upon the table otherwise than in the regular course of play, but not including a card led out of turn.

(b) Every card thrown with the one lead or played to the current trick. The player must indicate the one led or played.

(c) Every card so held by a player that his partner sees any portion of its face.

(d) All the cards in a hand lowered or shown by a player so that his partner sees more than one card of it.

(e) Every card named by the player holding it.

21. All cards liable to be called must be placed and left face upward on the table. A player must lead or play them when they are called, provided he can do so without revoking. The call may be repeated at each trick until the card is played. A player cannot be prevented from leading or playing a card liable to be called;

## STANDARD WHIST

if he can get rid of it in the course of play, no penalty remains.

22. If a player leads a card better than any his adversaries hold of the suit, and then leads one or more other cards without waiting for his partner to play, the latter may be called upon by either adversary to take the first trick, and the other cards thus improperly played are liable to be called; it makes no difference whether he plays them one after the other or throws them all on the table together, after the first card is played, the others are liable to be called.

23. A player having a card liable to be called must not play another until the adversaries have stated whether or not they wish to call the card liable to the penalty. If he plays another card without awaiting the decision of the adversaries, such other card, also, is liable to be called.

### LEADING OUT OF TURN

24. If any player leads out of turn, a suit may be called from him or his partner, the first time it is the turn of either of them to lead. The penalty can be enforced only by the adversary on the right of the player from whom a suit can be lawfully called.

If a player, so called on to lead a suit, has none of it, or if all have played to the false lead,

## THE LAWS OF WHIST

no penalty can be enforced. If all have not played to the trick, the cards erroneously played to such false lead are not liable to be called and must be taken back.

### PLAYING OUT OF TURN

25. If the third hand plays before the second, the fourth hand also may play before the second.

26. If the third hand has not played, and the fourth hand plays before the second, the latter may be called upon by the third hand to play his highest or lowest card of the suit led, or, if he has none, to trump or not to trump the trick.

### ABANDONED HANDS

27. If all four players throw their cards on the table, face upward, no further play of that hand is permitted. The result of the hand, as then claimed or admitted, is established — provided that, if a revoke is discovered, the revoke penalty attaches.

### REVOKING

28. A revoke is a renounce in error not corrected in time. A player renounces in error when, holding one or more cards of the suit led, he plays a card of a different suit.

A renounce in error may be corrected by the

## STANDARD WHIST

player making it, before the trick in which it occurs has been turned and quitted, unless either he or his partner, whether in his right turn or otherwise, has led or played to the following trick, or unless his partner has asked whether or not he has any of the suit renounced.

29. If a player corrects his mistake in time to save a revoke, the card improperly played by him is liable to be called; any player or players who have played after him may withdraw their cards and substitute others; the cards so withdrawn are not liable to be called.

30. The penalty for revoking is the transfer of two tricks from the revoking side to their adversaries; it can be enforced for as many revokes as occur during the hand. The revoking side cannot win the game in that hand; if both sides revoke, neither can win the game in that hand.

31. The revoking player and his partner may require the hand in which the revoke has been made to be played out, and score all points made by them up to the score of six.

32. At the end of a hand, the claimants of a revoke may search all the tricks. If the cards have been mixed, the claim may be urged and proved, if possible; but no proof is necessary, and the revoke is established, if, after it has been claimed, the accused player or his partner

## THE LAWS OF WHIST

mixes the cards before they have been examined to the satisfaction of the adversaries.

33. The revoke can be claimed at any time before the cards have been presented and cut for the following deal, but not thereafter.

### MISCELLANEOUS

34. Any one, during the play of a trick and before the cards have been touched for the purpose of gathering them together, may demand that the players draw their cards.

35. If any one, prior to his partner playing, calls attention in any manner to the trick or to the score, the adversary last to play to the trick may require the offender's partner to play his highest or lowest of the suit led, or, if he has none, to trump or not to trump the trick.

36. If any player says, "I can win the rest," "The rest are ours," "We have the game," or words to that effect, his partner's cards must be laid upon the table, and are liable to be called.

37. When a trick has been turned and quitted, it must not again be seen until after the hand has been played. A violation of this law subjects the offender's side to the same penalty as in case of a lead out of turn.

38. If a player is lawfully called upon to play the highest or lowest of a suit, or to trump or

## STANDARD WHIST

not to trump a trick, or to lead a suit, and unnecessarily fails to comply, he is liable to the same penalty as if he had revoked.

39. In all cases where a penalty has been incurred, the offender must await the decision of the adversaries. If either of them, with or without his partner's consent, demands a penalty to which they are entitled, such a decision is final. If the wrong adversary demands a penalty, or a wrong penalty is demanded, none can be enforced.

## THE ETIQUETTE OF WHIST,

AS ADOPTED BY THE  
THIRD AMERICAN WHIST CONGRESS,  
CHICAGO, JUNE, 1893

The following rules belong to the established code of Whist Etiquette. They are formulated with a view to discourage and repress certain improprieties of conduct, therein pointed out, which are not reached by the laws. The courtesy which marks the intercourse of gentlemen will regulate other more obvious cases.

1. No conversation should be indulged in during the play except such as is allowed by the laws of the game.
2. No player should in any manner whatsoever give any intimation as to the state of his hand or of the game, or of approval or disapproval of the play.
3. No player should lead until the preceding trick is turned and quitted.
4. No player should, after having led a winning card, draw a card from his hand for another

## STANDARD WHIST

lead until his partner has played to the current trick.

5. No player should play a card in any manner so as to call particular attention to it, nor should he demand that the cards be placed in order to attract the attention of his partner.

6. No player should purposely incur a penalty because he is willing to pay it, nor should he make a second revoke in order to conceal one previously made.

7. No player should take advantage of information imparted by his partner through a breach of etiquette.

8. No player should object to referring a disputed question of a fact to a bystander who professes himself uninterested in the result of the game and able to decide the question.

9. Bystanders should not in any manner call attention to or give any intimation concerning the play or the state of the game, during the play of a hand. They should not look over the hand of a player without his permission; nor should they walk around the table to look at the different hands.

# THE LAWS OF DUPLICATE WHIST,

AS ADOPTED ON TRIAL FOR ANOTHER YEAR AT THE  
NINTH AMERICAN WHIST CONGRESS,  
CHICAGO, JULY, 1899

## LAW I—DEFINITIONS

SECTION 1. The words and phrases used in these laws shall be construed in accordance with the following definitions, unless such construction is inconsistent with the context:

*Hand.* The thirteen cards received by any one player are termed a "hand."

*Deal.* The four hands into which a pack is distributed for play are termed a "deal"; the same term is also used to designate the act of distributing the cards to the players.

*Tray.* A "tray" is a device for retaining the hands of a deal and indicating the order of playing them.

*Dealer.* The player who is entitled to the trump card is termed the "dealer," whether the cards have or have not been dealt by him.

*Original play and overplay.* The first play of a

## STANDARD WHIST

deal is termed "the original play"; the second or any subsequent play of such deal, the "over-play."

*Duplicate whist.* "Duplicate Whist" is that form of the game of whist in which each deal is played once only by each player, but in which each is so overplayed as to bring the play of teams, pairs, or individuals into comparison.

*Renounce—renounce in error—revoke.* A player "renounces" when he does not follow suit to the card led; he "renounces in error" when, although holding one or more cards of the suit led, he plays a card of a different suit; if such renounce in error is not lawfully corrected, it constitutes a "revoke."

*Trick "turned and quitted."* A trick is "turned and quitted" when all four players have turned and quitted their respective cards.

### LAW II — FORMATION OF TEAMS AND ARRANGEMENT OF PLAYERS

**SECTION I.** The contesting teams must each consist of the same number of players. They may be formed and seated at tables as determined by agreement, lot, or otherwise, and the positions of the players at the table shall be designated as "north," "east," "south," and "west."

# THE LAWS OF DUPLICATE WHIST

## LAW III—SHUFFLING

SECTION 1. Before the cards are dealt they must be shuffled in the presence of an adversary or the umpire. Each player has the right to shuffle them once before each deal, each new deal, and each new cut. In all cases the dealer may shuffle last.

SECTION 2. *Right to re-shuffle.* The pack must not be so shuffled as to expose the face of any card, and if a card is so exposed each of the players has the right to re-shuffle the pack.

## LAW IV—CUTTING FOR THE TRUMP

SECTION 1. The dealer must present the cards to his right-hand adversary to be cut; such adversary must take from the top of the pack at least four cards and place them toward the dealer, leaving at least four cards in the remaining packet; the dealer must reunite the packets by placing the one not removed in cutting upon the other. If, in cutting or reuniting the separate packets, a card is exposed, the pack must be re-shuffled and cut again; if there is any confusion of the cards or doubt as to the place where the pack was separated, there must be a new cut.

# STANDARD WHIST

## LAW V—DEALING

SECTION 1. When the pack has been properly cut and reunited, the cards must be dealt one at a time, face down, from the top of the pack, the first to the player at the left of the dealer, and each successive card to the player at the left of the one to whom the last preceding card has been dealt. The last, which is the trump card, must be turned and placed face up on the tray, or, if no tray is used, then at the right of the dealer.

SECTION 2. *Compulsory new deal.* There must be a new deal—

- (a) If any card except the last is faced or exposed in any way in dealing.
- (b) If the pack is proved incorrect or imperfect.
- (c) If either more or less than thirteen cards are dealt to any player.
- (d) If the dealer's hand does not contain the trump card.

SECTION 3. *New deal on request.* There must be a new deal at the request of either player, provided such request is made by him before he has examined his cards—

- (a) If the cards are dealt by any person other than the dealer.
- (b) If the pack has not been properly cut.

# THE LAWS OF DUPLICATE WHIST

(c) If a card is dealt incorrectly, and the error is not corrected before another card is dealt.

(d) If the trump card is placed face down upon any other card.

## LAW VI—THE TRUMP CARD

SECTION 1. *Trump slip on original deal.* The trump card and the number of the dealer must be recorded before the play begins, on a slip provided for that purpose, and must not be elsewhere recorded. Such slip must be shown to an adversary, then turned face down, and placed in the tray, if one is used.

SECTION 2. *When to take up the trump card.* The dealer must leave the trump card face up until the first trick is turned and quitted, unless it is played to such trick. He must take the trump card into his hand and turn down the trump slip before the second trick is turned and quitted.

SECTION 3. *On the overplay.* When a deal is taken up for overplay the dealer must show the trump slip to an adversary, and thereafter treat the trump slip and trump card as in the case of an original deal. (See, Law 6, section 1.)

SECTION 4. *Naming trump or examining slip.* After the trump card has been lawfully taken into the hand, and the trump slip turned face

## STANDARD WHIST

down, the trump card must not be named nor the trump slip examined during the play of the deal; a player may, however, ask what the trump suit is.

SECTION 5. *Penalty.* If a player unlawfully looks at the trump slip, his highest or lowest trump may be called; if a player unlawfully names the trump card, his partner's highest or lowest trump may be called.

SECTION 6. *Inflicting penalty.* These penalties can be inflicted by either adversary at any time during the play of the deal in which they are incurred, before the player from whom the call can be made has played to the current trick; the call may be repeated at each or any trick until the card is played, but cannot be changed.

SECTION 7. *After deal has been played.* When a deal has been played the cards of the respective players, including the trump card, must be placed in the tray face down, and the trump slip placed face up on top of the dealer's cards.

SECTION 8. *Turning the wrong trump.* If, on the overplay of a deal, a trump card is turned other than the one recorded on the trump slip, and such error is discovered and corrected before the play of the deal is commenced, the card turned in error is liable to be called.

SECTION 9. *Penalty.* If such error is not corrected until after the overplay has begun, and

## THE LAWS OF DUPLICATE WHIST

more than two tables are engaged in play, the offender and his partner shall be given the lowest score made with their hands on that deal at any table; if less than three tables are engaged, the offender's adversaries may consult, and shall have the option either to score the deal as a tie or to have the pack re-dealt, and such new deal played and overplayed.

SECTION 10. *Recording wrong trump—penalty.* Should a player, after the cards are dealt, record on the trump slip a different trump from the one turned in dealing, and the error be discovered at the next table, there must be a new deal; if the deal has been played at one or more tables with the wrong trump, the recorded trump must be taken as correct, and the pair of the player making the error be given the lowest score for that deal. If, however, less than three tables are in play there must be a new deal.

### LAW VII—IRREGULARITIES IN THE HANDS

SECTION 1. *More or less than correct number of cards—penalty.* In case a player on the overplay is found to have either more or less than his correct number of cards, if less than three tables are engaged, there must be a new deal; but if more than two tables are in play, the hands must be rectified, and then passed to the next table.

## STANDARD WHIST

The table at which the error was discovered must not overplay the deal, but shall take the average score.

SECTION 2. *Cards left in the tray.* If, after the first trick has been turned and quitted, a player is found to have less than his correct number of cards, and the missing card or cards are found in the tray, such player and his partner shall be given the lowest score on that deal.

### LAW VIII—PLAYING, TURNING, AND QUITTING THE CARDS

SECTION 1. *Playing the cards.* Each player, when it is his turn to play, must place his card face up before him, and toward the center of the table, and allow it to remain upon the table in this position until all have played to the trick, when he must turn it over and place it face down, and nearer to himself, placing each successive card, as he turns it, so that it overlaps the last card played by him, and with the ends toward the winners of the trick. After he has played his card, and also after he has turned it, he must quit it by moving his hand.

SECTION 2. *After cards are played.* The cards must be left in the order in which they were played and quitted, until the scores for the deal are recorded.

## THE LAWS OF DUPLICATE WHIST

SECTION 3. *Turning another's card.* During the play of a deal a player must not pick up or turn another player's cards.

SECTION 4. *Asking to see the last cards played.* Before a trick is turned and quitted any player may require any of the other players to show the face of the cards played to that trick.

SECTION 5. *Trick once turned and quitted.* If a player names a card of a trick which has been turned and quitted, or turns or raises any such card so that any such portion of its face can be seen by himself or any other player, he is liable to the same penalty as if he had led out of turn.

### LAW IX—CARDS LIABLE TO BE CALLED

SECTION 1. The following cards are liable to be called:

(a) Every card so placed upon the table as to expose any of the printing on its face, except such cards as these laws specifically provide shall not be so liable.

(b) Every card so held by a player that his partner sees any of the printing on its face.

(c) Every card (except the trump card) named by the player holding it.

(d) The trump card, if it is not taken into the dealer's hand, and the trump slip turned face down before the second trick is turned and quitted.

## STANDARD WHIST

**SECTION 2.** "*I can win the rest,*" etc. If a player says, "I can win the rest," "The rest are ours," "It makes no difference how you play," or words to that effect, his partner's cards must be laid face up on the table, and are liable to be called.

**SECTION 3.** *Where to place and when to play cards liable to be called.* All cards liable to be called must be placed and left until played face up on the table. A player must lead or play them when lawfully called, provided he can do so without revoking; the call may be repeated at each or any trick until the card is played. A player cannot, however, be prevented from leading or playing a card liable to be called; if he can get rid of it in the course of play no penalty remains.

**SECTION 4.** *By whom and when cards can be called.* The holder of a card liable to be called can be required to play it only by the adversary on his right. If such adversary plays without calling it, the holder may play to that trick as he pleases; if it is the holder's turn to lead, the card must be called before the preceding trick has been turned and quitted, or before the holder has led a different card; otherwise he may lead as he pleases.

# THE LAWS OF DUPLICATE WHIST

## LAW X—LEADING OUT OF TURN

**SECTION 1.** *Penalty lost.* If a player leads out of turn, and the error is discovered before all have played to such lead, a suit may be called from him or from his partner, as the case may be; the first time thereafter it is the right of either of them to lead; but the card led out of turn is not liable to be called, and must be taken into the hand. The penalty can be enforced only by the adversary on the right of the one from whom a lead can lawfully be called. If all have played to the false lead, the right to the penalty is lost, if one or more, but not all, have played to the trick, the cards played to such false lead must be taken back and are not liable to be called.

**SECTION 2.** *When it is an adversary's turn to lead.* If a player leads when it is the turn of an adversary to lead, the right to call a suit is lost, unless the player having the right to inflict the penalty announces the suit he desires led before the first trick thereafter won by the offender or his partner is turned and quitted.

**SECTION 3.** *When it is partner's turn to lead.* If a player leads when it is his partner's turn, the proper leader must not lead until a suit has been lawfully called, or the right to inflict the penalty has been waived or forfeited by his

## STANDARD WHIST

adversaries. If any one leads while liable to this penalty, the card so led is liable to be called; but if either adversary plays to such lead the right to call a suit is lost.

SECTION 4. *Penalty paid.* If a player, when called on to lead a suit, has none of it, the penalty is paid, and he may lead as he pleases.

### LAW XI—PLAYING OUT OF TURN

SECTION 1. If the third hand plays before the second, the fourth hand also may play before the second.

SECTION 2. If the third hand has not played, and the fourth hand plays before the second, the latter may be called upon by the third hand to play his highest or lowest card of the suit led, or, if he has none of it, to trump or not to trump the trick; the penalty cannot be inflicted after the third hand has played to the trick. If the player liable to this penalty plays before it has been inflicted, waived, or lost, the card so played is liable to be called.

### LAW XII—THE REVOKE

SECTION 1. *Revoke established.* A renounce in error may be corrected by the player making it, except in the following cases, in which a revoke is established and the penalty therefore incurred:

## THE LAWS OF DUPLICATE WHIST

(a) When the trick in which it occurs has been turned and quitted.

(b) When the renouncing player or his partner, whether in his right turn or otherwise, has led or played to the following trick.

(c) When the partner of the renouncing player has called attention to the renounce.

**SECTION 2.** *Asking adversary if he renounced.* At any time before a trick is turned and quitted a player may ask an adversary if he has any of a suit to which such adversary has renounced in that trick, and can require the error to be corrected in case such adversary is found to have any of such suit.

**SECTION 3.** *Correcting renounce.* If a player who has renounced in error lawfully corrects his mistake, the card improperly played by him is liable to be called, any player who has played after him may withdraw his card and substitute another; a card so withdrawn is not liable to be called.

**SECTION 4.** *Penalty for revoke.* The penalty for a revoke is the transfer of two tricks from the revoking side to their adversaries; it can be enforced for as many revokes as occur during the play of that deal, but is limited to the number of tricks won by the offending side; no pair, however, can score more than thirteen on the play of any one deal. The revoking player and

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his partner cannot score more than the average on the deal in which the revoke occurs.

SECTION 5. *Claiming revoke.* A revoke may be claimed at any time before the last trick of the deal in which it occurs has been turned and quitted and the score recorded, but not thereafter.

SECTION 6. *Examining hands for revoke.* At the end of the play of a deal, the claimants of a revoke can examine all the cards; if either hand has been shuffled, the claim may be urged and proved if possible; but no proof is necessary and the revoke is established, if, after it has been claimed, the accused player or his partner disturbs the order of the cards before they have been examined to the satisfaction of the adversaries.

### LAW XIII—MISCELLANEOUS

SECTION 1. *Calling attention to trick.* If any one calls attention in any manner to the trick before his partner has played thereto, the adversary last to play to the trick may require the offender's partner to play his highest or lowest of the suit led, or if he has none of that suit, to trump or not to trump the trick.

SECTION 2. *Reminding partner as to penalty.* A player has the right to remind his partner that it is his privilege to enforce a penalty, and also to inform him of the penalty he can enforce.

## THE LAWS OF DUPLICATE WHIST

SECTION 3. *Preventing commission of irregularity.* A player has the right to prevent his partner from committing any irregularity, except revoking.

SECTION 4. *Enforcing penalties.* If either of the adversaries, whether with or without his partner's consent, demands or waives a penalty to which they are entitled, such decision is final; if the wrong adversary demands a penalty, or a wrong penalty is demanded, none can be enforced.

SECTION 5. *Failing to comply with call.* If a player is lawfully called upon to play the highest or the lowest of a suit, to trump or not to trump a trick, to lead a suit, or to win a trick, and unnecessarily fails to comply, he is liable to the same penalty as if he had revoked.

SECTION 6. *Playing twice in succession.* If any one leads or plays a card, and then, before his partner has played to the trick, leads one or more other cards, or plays two or more cards together, all of which are better than any his adversaries hold of the suit, his partner may be called upon by either adversary to win the first or any subsequent trick to which any of said cards are played, and the remaining cards so played are liable to be called.

## GLOSSARY OF COMMON AND TECHNICAL TERMS

**ABANDONED HAND.**—A hand at whist, or such portion of it as remains, which for any reason is thrown face upward upon the table by a player or players.

**ACE.**—A card containing one pip or spot. The ace is the highest card in whist in a trick-winning sense, but the lowest in respect to cutting.

**ADVERSE SUIT.**—The suit of an opponent.

**AMERICAN LEADS.**—A system of leads whereby both number in suit and the holding of certain high cards are frequently proclaimed.

**BACKWARD PLAY.**—The play of low cards when holding high or commanding ones.

**BEST CARD.**—See “Master Card.”

**BLOCKING.**—Obstructing a suit by retaining such a card of it as prevents its becoming established.

**BOOK.**—A term applied to the first six tricks taken in play and gathered together in one lot. Every trick taken after a book is closed counts as a point for the players taking it.

**BRING IN.**—*To bring in a suit* is to take tricks with all the remaining cards of the suit.

## GLOSSARY

**BUMBLEPUPPY.**—“A manner of playing whist either in ignorance of all known rules, or in defiance of them, or both.”

**CALL.**—See “Signal.”

**CALLING THROUGH THE HONOR.**—See “False-Card Lead.”

**CARD OF RE-ENTRY.**—See “Re-entry.”

**CARD SENSE.**—A peculiar faculty or fine whist perception, instinctive, not acquired, which gives a player an insight into the intricacies of the game.

**COMMAND.**—The ability to take every trick in a suit regardless of by whom led.

**COMMANDING CARDS.**—See “Master Cards.”

**COMPASS WHIST.**—See “Progressive Whist.”

**CONVENTIONAL PLAY.**—Play in accordance with given rules.

**COUP.**—A strategic move; a brilliant play.

**COURT CARDS.**—Ace, king, queen, and jack.

**COVER.**—To play a higher card than the one led, as to cover an honor with ace.

**CROSS RUFF.**—The alternate trumping of partners.

**CUTTING.**—The act of dividing a pack of cards into two distinct portions.

**DEAL.**—The fifty-two cards as dealt to each player; that is, the four hands combined.

**DEALING.**—The act of distributing the fifty-two cards. The player who distributes them is called the *dealer*. The dealer is fourth player to the first trick.

**DESCHAPELLES'S COUP.**—The irregular lead of king,

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queen, or jack in order to force out higher adverse cards, in the hope that any inferior card of the suit which partner may chance to hold may thus become the master card and through it he be enabled to obtain the lead.

**DEUCE.**—A card containing two pips or spots; the two-spot.

**DISCARD.**—The play of a card of a suit other than the suit led when having none of the suit led and not trumping.

**DOUBTFUL TRICK.**—A trick which partner or opponent may win.

**DRAW YOUR CARDS.**—A form employed when asking players to indicate the respective order in which the cards were played. This they do by withdrawing their cards from the center of the table and placing them in front of themselves.

**DUMMY.**—Whist as played by three players, the fourth hand being exposed and termed "dummy." Double dummy is played by two players, each player having a dummy as his partner.

**DUPLICATE WHIST.**—A modification of the game of whist, by which the respective hands are kept intact, and overplayed, each side in the overplay playing the hands originally played by their opponents.

**ECHO.**—A trump signal made by the partner of the player who leads or signals for trumps, when holding four or more trumps.

**ELDEST HAND.**—The player who first opens a hand, or the player to the left of the dealer.

## GLOSSARY

**ELEVEN RULE.**—A rule, the application of which enables a player to infer the number of cards higher of the suit than the one led which are not in the leader's hand.

**ESTABLISH.**—A suit is established when one holds the complete control—that is, when no other player can take a trick in it.

**EXPOSED CARD.**—A card faced upon the table other than in the regular order of play, or in any manner so exposed as to be recognized, and therefore liable to be called.

**FACE CARDS.**—King, queen, and jack.

**FALL OF THE CARDS.**—The special order in which the cards are played

**FALSE CARD.**—A card played contrary to conventional rules for the purpose of deceiving opponents.

**FALSE-CARD LEAD.**—An irregular lead, made because of the bearing of the card turned upon the leader's trump holding. It issues to one's partner a command to lead a trump through the card turned. Called also "Calling through the Honor."

**FINESSE.**—The attempt to win a trick with a card lower than one's highest and not in sequence with it.

**FIRST HAND.**—The leader or first player to each trick.

**FOLLOW.**—The cards played to the card led. Applied also to a player's second lead from a suit which he has previously led. *To follow suit* is to play a card of the suit led.

**FORCE.**—To force is to lead such a card of a plain

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suit as will compel a trump from the player winning the trick.

**FORCED LEAD.**—A lead made from a short suit because of some unusual development.

**FOURCHETTE.**—The card next above and the card next below the card led.

**FOURTH BEST.**—The fourth card of a suit, counting from the top downward.

**FOURTH HAND.**—The last player to a trick; the player to the left of dealer.

**GAME.**—“A game of whist is a contest between four players, two on each side, to see which can first score a certain number of points.”

**GRAND COUP.**—The act of throwing away a superfluous trump.

**GUARDED.**—A high card is guarded when it is protected by smaller ones. King, when having one smaller card with it, is once guarded; when having two smaller cards with it, is twice guarded.

**HAND.**—The thirteen cards dealt to a player.

**HIGH CARDS.**—Ace, king, queen, jack, ten.

**HOLDING UP.**—Keeping back commanding cards and playing smaller ones; refusing to win a trick though having the power.

**HONORS.**—Ace, king, queen, and jack of trumps. For convenience, often applied to corresponding cards of the plain suits.

**IN.**—The cards which have not been played are said to be “in,” or “in play.”

## GLOSSARY

**INDIFFERENT CARDS.**—Cards are indifferent, or of indifferent value, when the lead of one marks the holding of the other.

**IN THE LEAD.**—The player whose turn it is to lead is “in the lead.”

**IRREGULAR LEAD.**—A lead not in accordance with given rules.

**LEAD.**—The first card played of any round or trick. *To lead* is to play the first card of any round or trick.

**LEADER.**—The first player of any round or trick.

**LEADING THROUGH.**—Leading the suit of left opponent.

**LEADING UP TO.**—Leading the suit of right opponent.

**LONG CARDS.**—The cards of a suit remaining in hand after the other cards of the suit have been played.

**LONG SUIT.**—A suit consisting of four or more cards.

**LONG TRUMPS.**—See “Long Cards.”

**LONG WHIST.**—The game of whist, consisting of ten points and honors, as played in England in the eighteenth century, before the introduction of *short whist*.

**LOSING CARD.**—Such card as must fall to a superior card.

**LOVE.**—No score.

**LOVE-ALL.**—The state of the score before either side has made a point.

**LOW CARDS.**—All the cards lower than ten.

**MAKE.**—*To make a card* is to take a trick with it. *To make or make up the cards* is to shuffle.

## STANDARD WHIST

**MASTER CARD.**—The highest card remaining of a suit. The card which, if not trumped, will win all the other cards of the suit.

**MNEMONIC DUPLICATE.**—See “Single-Table Duplicate.”

**ODD CARD.**—See “Odd Trick.”

**ODD TRICK.**—The one trick taken by either side after winning the six cards composing the book.

**OPENING.**—The system or plan upon which a game is begun; the first lead from a suit or hand.

**ORIGINAL LEAD.**—A term applying to the first lead from a suit or hand.

**ORIGINAL PLAY.**—The first play of a deal is termed “the original play”; the second play of such deal is termed the “overplay.” Terms applying to “Duplicate Whist.”

**OUT.**—The cards which have been played are said to be “out.”

**PACK.**—A set or deck of fifty-two playing cards.

**PASS.**—To make no effort to win a trick.

**PENALTY.**—A forfeit imposed because of a violation of a prescribed law.

**PENULTIMATE.**—A term, now obsolete, applied to the lowest card but one of a suit. Superseded by “fourth best” as a lead.

**PIANO HAND.**—A hand, the playing of which requires no skill, and which in a duplicate match would likely result in the same score at every table.

**PLAIN SUIT.**—A suit not the trump suit.

## GLOSSARY

**PLAIN-SUIT ECHO.**—A term occasionally, but incorrectly, applied to "Unblocking."

**PLAY.**—A *play* consists in the act of drawing a card from the hand and placing it upon the table. *To play to a trick* is to go through with the form as above explained.

**PLAYING OUT OF TURN.**—Playing a card upon the table before it is one's turn to do so.

**PLAYING TO THE SCORE.**—So playing as, if possible, to obtain the number of tricks necessary either to win or to save a game.

**POINTS.**—Each trick in excess of six counts as a point.

**PRIVATE CONVENTIONS.**—A system of conventions and signals previously agreed upon between two partners, but not communicated to their opponents.

**PROGRESSIVE WHIST.**—A form of duplicate whist wherein the east and west players move from table to table.

**QUART.**—Four cards in sequence. Ace, king, queen, and jack of a suit constitute a *quart major*.

**QUINT.**—Five cards in sequence.

**QUITTED.**—A trick is said to be "quitted" when the four players have removed their hands from their respective cards and they have been gathered and turned down on the table.

**RE-ENTRY.**—Such a card as will enable one to regain possession of the lead.

**RENOUCE.**—To renounce is to play a card of a plain suit other than the one led, holding none of the suit led.

## STANDARD WHIST

**REVERSE DISCARD.**—A discard wherein the usual meaning attaching to discards is reversed. Made in the same manner as the “Trump Signal.”

**REVOKE.**—The play of a card other than the suit led, holding card or cards of the suit led.

**ROUND.**—The card led and the three cards played to it constitute a round. There are thirteen rounds or tricks in every hand.

**RUBBER.**—Two out of three games, or two in succession.

**RUFFING.**—Trumping a card of a plain suit led, having none of the suit led.

**SCORE.**—The record of points made upon the game.

**SECOND HAND.**—The player to the left of leader.

**SEE-SAW.**—See “Cross Ruff.”

**SEQUENCE.**—Two or more cards of consecutive value.

**SHORT SUIT.**—A suit of less than four cards.

**SHORT WHIST.**—The game consisting of five points and honors, as generally played in England.

**SHUFFLE.**—The act of mixing or changing the relative position of the cards.

**SIGNAL.**—A recognized convention which conveys information. See “Trump Signal.”

**SINGLE-DISCARD CALL.**—A trump signal or call made by the discard of an eight or higher card of an unopened suit.

**SINGLE-TABLE DUPLICATE.**—Duplicate whist as confined to one table.

**SINGLETON.**—The only card of a suit dealt to a player.

## GLOSSARY

**SLAM.**—The players *make a slam* who take the entire thirteen tricks.

**SMALL CARDS.**—See “Low Cards.”

**SPECIAL TRUMP LEADS.**—Irregular trump leads resorted to by reason of the particular card turned or some unusual development.

**STRAIGHT WHIST.**—The game of whist where the deals are played but once.

**STRENGTHENING CARD.**—Such a card as, if led, will presumably work to the establishment of one’s partner’s suit.

**STRONG SUIT.**—A suit combining both high-card and numerical strength.

**SUB-ECHO.**—A form of echo showing three trumps.

**SUIT.**—One of the four divisions of a pack of cards. A pack consists of four divisions, denominated respectively spades, hearts, clubs, and diamonds.

**TENACE.**—The best and third best, or second and fourth best cards of a suit. The former constitutes the *major tenace*; the latter, the *minor tenace*. The best, third best, and fifth best cards of a suit, or ace, queen, ten, constitute a *double tenace*.

**THIRD HAND.**—The partner of the leader.

**THIRTEENTH.**—The last unplayed card of a suit.

**THROWING THE LEAD.**—Playing such a card as will compel another player to take the trick, and thereby obtain the lead.

**TIERCE.**—A sequence of three cards.

**TREY.**—A card containing three pips or spots.

## STANDARD WHIST

**TRICK.**—The card led and the three cards played to it constitute *a trick*.

**TRUMP CARD.**—The card turned by dealer—the last one dealt.

**TRUMPS OR TRUMP SUIT.**—The suit represented by the card turned, or previously agreed upon as the trump suit.

**TRUMP SIGNAL.**—The play of an unnecessarily high card, followed by a lower one of the same suit. It issues to one's partner a command to lead trumps.

**TURN-UP.**—See "Trump Card."

**UNBLOCKING.**—Getting rid of the commanding or of such high cards of partner's suit as might otherwise prevent the suit from becoming established.

**UNDERPLAY.**—The lead or play of a losing card of a suit when holding winning ones.

**WEAK SUIT.**—A suit void of high cards.

**WINNING CARDS.**—Cards good for tricks. See "Master Cards."

**YARBOROUGH.**—A hand containing no higher card than nine.

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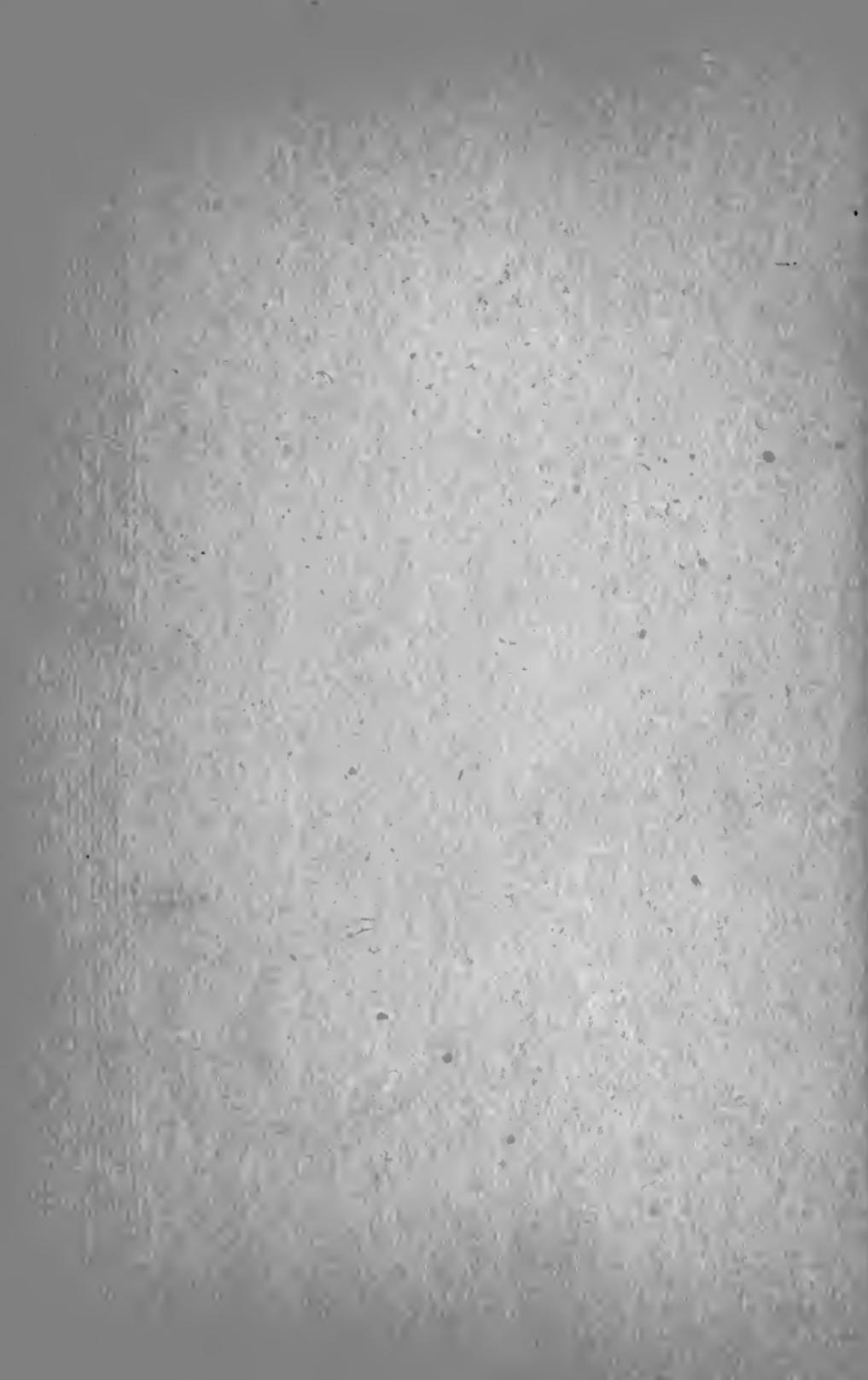








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# Standard Whist